真・天地無用！魎皇鬼外伝

天地無用！GXP 6

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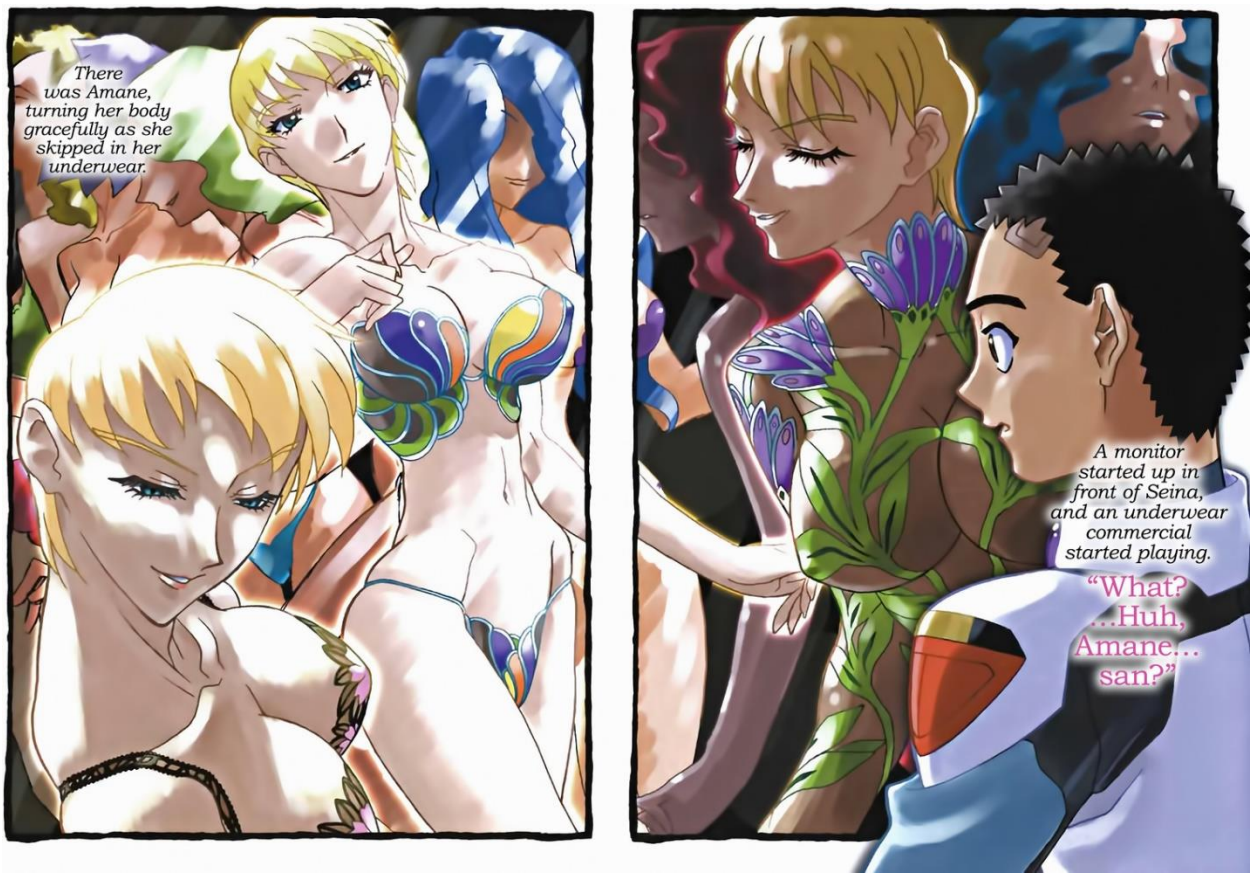
SHIN TENCHI MUYO! RYO-OHKI GAIDEN
真·天地無用! 魎皇鬼外伝
天地無用! GXP 6
TENCHI MUYO!
Erma moved away and pretended to work as she watched the woman. She had blonde hair, brown skin, and blue eyes. She was wearing optical camouflage similar to Kiriko's when she fought Tarant's pirates. Her hair was shorter than Amane's, and just from her gestures, it was apparent that her whole body was like a mass of springs.


There was Amane, turning her body gracefully as she skipped in her underwear.
A monitor started up in front of Seina, and an underwear commercial started playing.
"What? ...Huh, Amane... san?"

"Me too… living with you and the others was fun. If possible… I wanted things to stay like that forever…"
Large tears were falling from Ryoko's face.
"Even for me… this was the place where I could live as myself."

Table of Contents

Chapter One: First Encounter **7**

Chapter Two: Comfort, Consolation, and Hardship **15**

Chapter Three: Melancholy **45**

Chapter Four: First Month's Salary **56**

Chapter Five: Joy and Sorrow **71**

Chapter Six: The Wall of Stupidity **100**

Chapter Seven: Run, Run, Run **103**

Afterword: Concluding Theater Part 3 **105**

Illustrations

Cover - Ryoko, Seina, and Erma	**Cover**
Pinup 1 - Erma, Mikami, and Tennyo	**2**
Pinup 2 - Amane and Seina	**3**
Pinup 3 - Ryoko and Seina	**4**
Karen and Gyokuren	**10**
Pinup 1 - Erma, Mikami, and Tennyo	**18**
GXP Police Car	**20**
Mikami and Seina	**32**
Ryoko and her Adjutant	**45**
Ryoko	**54**
Mikami and Airi	**62**
Seina and the Girls	**71**
Pinup 2 - Amane and Seina	**73**
Amane and Kiriko	**80**
Seina shopping	**89**
Pinup 3 - Ryoko and Seina	**94**
Minaho and Seto	**102**

Chapter One: First Encounter

Seina was in the Captain's seat of the Kamidake looking at the map of the galaxy. He noticed that about a 3rd of the galaxy belonged to the Galactic Federation but a lot of it looked like veins or tree roots and much of their territory looked like it was like Swiss cheese with lots of holes in it. Nothing was really happening past Earth. There were still a lot of undeveloped areas of space judging from the data he was looking at.

He wanted to see it and it was possible with the Kamidake for him to travel even to another galaxy but his job was to act as pirate bait and the ship belonged to Jurai, so he was limited to traveling in federation space.

Kiriko read off test readings to Seina. They were conducting a test flight of the ship.

“It's weird that there hasn't been any trouble so far.” Amane said.

“We better finish these tests as soon as possible, we don't want to get trapped if anything happens.”

“I'd hate for anything to happen, this is a pretty nice ship.”

“Oh, is it?” Seina asked.

“Yes, it's even better than the ship that I first came to the academy on, and that was an expensive private luxury liner my friend owned. It responds well, it shoots well, and you can barely feel it move.”

“Oh, is that so? I just figured all ships were like this...” Their ship was currently in hyperspace.

“Alright, hull integrity checks are complete, time to start the next test.” The ship exited hyperspace and came out right in front of a medium sized pirate ship.

“Stop your ship and don't put up any resistance.” The pirate hailed them.

“No we won't but you can surrender now if you like.” Hakuren said.

The pirate got mad at them and fired a warning shot. They expected to overwhelm them because the Kamidake was so small and looked to be a weak target. But the Kamidake recognized the warning shot as an attack and began to open fire.

Soon the space pirate hailed them again with a desperate expression. “Wait, wait! Stop it! Stop! The pirate screamed but the Kamidake's attack didn't stop.

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Amane looked at Seina, it was up to the Captain's discretion whether to continue the attack or not. However Seina remained silent, and stared at the pirate ship.

Kiriko noticed that Seina looked different from usual as he watched the pirate on the screen. He was ignoring the pirate's pleas. Kiriko kept looking at him, waiting for him to give the order to not destroy the enemy ship when suddenly he heard a babies cry in the background.

"Huh!! Stop the attack!" Seina yelled.

"Stopping the attack!" Kiriko responded.

Hakuren again recommended they surrender. This time the Space pirates didn't refuse.

"Captain, will you please consult with me in private about revising our test plan?" Kiriko asked. Seina and Kiriko's seats descend down to the lower floor where Seina's Captain's cabin was.

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"If I were Captain I bet I could do better, "Alan said in a bragging tone so Hakuren would hear.

"He was appointed Captain so he has the right to decide our route." Hakuren said.

"Yes, but he's still immature, that's why they assigned us to watch over him.... Speaking of which, what is a beautiful lady like you doing here? Where are you from? I've never seen you before."

"We are Airi's secretaries, the experiment is canceled, please wait quietly for orders."

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Alan nudged Barry with his shoulder.

"We should start a new fan club around her! The revenue will be amazing ... ... "

"But we've been sworn to secrecy, this whole thing is highly confidential, they have to be keeping tabs on everyone. We'll get in trouble."

"So what, we'll make even more than we would at this job. Wouldn't you pay out the nose to see a girl like Gyokuren? Not even a top model can compare to her."

"Well I suppose we could go on the run and hire others to manage it but wouldn't that be too expensive?"

"Sure they'll be after us but they'll quit after a while."

"... ... but what about her, would she want that?"

"There is no woman who wouldn't like to be a star of the entertainment world!" Alan's ability to make his friends completely disillusioned with his bad logic took effect.

"I see!" as usual Cohen and Barry said, synchronized without verifying the feasibility of Alan's opinion among themselves.

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“Oh, is this my room ...?” Alan went to his quarters and found the door with his name but it also had Barry and Cohen's name.

“There are plenty of rooms, so why do all three of us have to share?”

Although the Kamidake was a small ship, up to 50 people were able to live aboard it, if they alternated shifts. There were about thirty personal rooms in it.

“Maybe because we are on the bottom end of the hierarchy?”

“That's it. I'm going to go talk to Seina!” But the door of their room opened and out came Gyokuren and Karen.

“What are you talking about?” Gyokuren smiled.

Alan froze up.

“We've prepared your room for you. Please get some rest so you can get back to work as soon as possible.” Karen turned to leave with Gyokuren.

Alan unfroze as she began to walk away and he quickly went to stop her. “Actually, I have a question about our room.”

“Oh, I see.” Karen knew what he meant before he told her.

“In the other rooms, we have measuring instruments for the experiments installed, so we only have minimal living space right now so we put you three in the same room.”

“The Kamidake is a new model for mass production, we have to eliminate any possible problems it may have before putting it on the production line, which is why this ship was given to the Captain.” Gyokuren said while looking over Karen's shoulder.

It was just like the moment when the sun was completely hidden in the shadow of the moon during a total solar eclipse.

“Oh I see ... ... if Seina can sail without problems I guess anyone can.” Alan retreated towards his room like a scared fish.

“Something like that.”

“Well then, we're off to our room.”

“Oh yeah, and remember your confidentiality agreement is indefinite, by the way.” Karen smiled and said to Alan, who tried to enter his room to push Barry - and Cohen who panicked and quickly shoved the other two into the room.

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“Oh, darn, you could let them dream for a while longer, it was so entertaining.” Gyokuren smiled like a demon. They got in the elevator.

“It's better for all of us that they concentrate on work and nothing else while there on this ship. Don't you think?”

“They're just supplementary staff here because of GP regulations. They only hired them because they were poverty-stricken.”

“Gyokuren are you really interested in the entertainment industry? You know what will happen!” She said angrily.

Gyokuren was harmless to Alan who was fantasizing about trying to make money by using her. But she was familiar with the influences of her own beauty. It would drive people mad and bring hell upon all of those involved, which would likely end up blowing up in Seina's face.

“That's uhm... ....” Gyokuren thought about it and realized what could happen to Seina. Everyone around her was worried about her harming him. Kiriko, Seto, Airi, Tennyo and even Karen right that moment had warned her. Seina's life was no laughing matter for Gyokuren had fallen in love with him.

“OK, I understand.” Gyokuren said with a serious expression.

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The image of Seina and Kiriko in the Captain's room was quite a strange picture. Kiriko was scolding him as he sat slumped down in the Captain's seat. (I'm pretty sure normally this should be the other way around.)

Amane kept watch over the two.

“Excuse me. I'm sorry.”

“You're the Captain, you don't have to apologize for that, even if you destroyed their ship there would have been no problem.”

“What?” Seina looked up with a strange look.

“What I wanted to ask is what you were thinking at that time?” Kiriko said.

“... .... Kiriko!” Amane called out to interrupt Kiriko, she looked in Seina's direction quickly. “You did the right thing attacking them. They refused to surrender and fired on us first, and the other party was a top tier criminal ship, do you understand?”

In other words, it didn't matter if they destroyed the ship or not.

“What I would like to know is why you didn't issue an order to stop the attack immediately when they begged us to stop ... normally a Captain would have instructed us to stop our attack immediately. What on earth were you thinking?” Seina finally understood her intentions.

“... ... That it was strange. The existence of Space pirates is mysterious to me.”

“Strange?”

“The universe is so wide and free ... .” The universe was projected throughout the Captain's room, and Seina, Kiriko and Amane appeared to float in space.

“In the Milky Way .... No, even just within the Galactic Federation there are countless undeveloped residential planets. If you don't have an idea how many there are then just look up how many planets are recruiting colonists right now ... ...” Seina clutched his fist tight.

Kiriko immediately understood Seina's intentions. The biggest reason why piracy was done was poverty.

“Because it's not necessary, they rob people and it's not necessary.”

Strictly speaking, however, those with pirate battleships were not poor people. Even the most basic ship had the necessary equipment for planetary development. Even if suddenly large-scale development was impossible, it would still be easy to start an advanced colony on the level of development as the Earth. There was no need for them to take away things from others.

“So why do they do it then, why?”

“There are many reasons, the main reason is that it gets them resources quicker. It's like using a ladder to climb a tree instead of climbing, and guilds provides military like protection for some, usually though when they’re asked why, they say it's because they have just inherited the “family business”.”

“Those reasons are bullshit!” Seina’s face was flushed with anger.

“Of course, guys like Tarrant are a special case, Captain. Did you know that there are certain rules between us and the Space pirates?” Kiriko asked.

Seina nodded.

“Like you said, there is no real special reason for them to do this, most are just succeeding their family business, and their guilt towards their punishment is usually surprisingly low. They are quite ordinary people, and the recidivism rate of Space pirates who are caught and convicted is surprisingly low.”

“Space pirating... ... is a family business .....?”

“It's a remnant from before the Galactic Federation was organized. At that time, there were still a lot of hostile planets, and taking an enemy’s shipping vessels and robbing them of items damaged the enemy. It fits the national interests of most nations and so it was natural that it was encouraged not only by the military of each country but also by the private sector. So, for many it was established as a family business. However, it is certain that the strange rules we have with them are one of the reasons for the increasing number of Space pirates, but if every ship carrying a package faced mortal danger every time they delivered something it wouldn't be a viable business.”

“Is it a necessary evil ...?”

“Yes, and this ship and its Captain have to overcome it.”

Seina looked up like he was surprised.

“We had manage to cut a few blooms of them in the past but now it's possible that we could fundamentally eliminate them. Thanks to the Captains and the criminals who were captured by you, a large number of pirates cease to exist, now. The economic income rates of the Galactic Federation are the highest they've been in hundreds of years. It will probably increase further. I haven't been told anything more in detail yet, but you being a Captain is a part of a big plan.” Kiriko said.

“With me ... ... in this ship?” Seina asked. Kiriko nodded.

“Anyway I know it's early but I think as the Captain you should take a day off.” And with that Kiriko bowed and quickly left the room.

“Hmmpf! Wow, she sure left fast, I guess she didn't want to be seen by anyone else.” Amane laughed and sat down on the armrest of the Captain's seat. “Well then, wanna have a meal with me?”

Seina tried to get up from the chair and avoided looking in Amane's eyes, but Amane took him by the neck and held him down in the chair. She leaned in and moved her hand to his head where she began to caress his crew cut.

“Hey, why did you do that, Seina-chan? Oh wow, I sound just like her!” Amane smiled and giggled to negate the seriousness of her words.

“Amane!” Kiriko, came back to the Captain's room to intervene. She took Amane by the back of her neck and then tried to drag Amane out of the room as if she was a cat carrying its kitten.

“Kiriko, is the baby on that ship safe?” Seina asked Kiriko. That was also why Seina gave the order to stop the attack.

“They don't have a baby on that ship”

“What? But ... .”

“There is something that plays that sound when your ship is about to be destroyed to get people’s attention, it's like a doorbell or a knocking sound in a commercial, it’s there to deliberately get your attention and make you stop the attack.”

“You don't have to worry, every new Captain usually falls for it. It's like a rite of passage.” Amane laughed as if to cover the blow of Kiriko's words.

“Oh ... well I guess that's good.”

Seina had mixed emotions. He didn't want to destroy their ship at the moment but he had let a bunch of top tier criminals go for no reason.

“Captain, that's why we are attached as your aides.”

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“What do you think? ...” Airi asked Mikami and Minaho while watching the report from Kiriko.

“I guess that's to be expected from someone with his biased probability ...”

“I think that he's still a bit childish.”

“Do you intend to make him to call you mommy ...?” Mikami asked, giving Airi a harsh look.

“Well... to heal a wounded heart is a duty best left to one's mother.” Airi hugged the air and made a kissy face.

“Do that and he’ll just have more trauma, ho ho ho.”

“Trauma. Hey! My love is medicine!”

“An overdose of medicine is still poison ... and ... besides, isn't Kiriko supposed to act as his doctor?”

“Uhm, well, I sure am tired! I should go.... Bye!” Minaho read the air between Airi and Mikami and hurried to leave.

“I hate it when she leaves me. Oh, it's so hard being a Mom.” Airi said. Minaho glared at her then turned to Mikami.

“Mikami please don't become a problem for Seina, it's the last thing he needs right now, ok?”

“Well, unlike Airi and Seina's way of thinking, I'm not childish. I have a good handle on my emotions and actions.” Mikami took her face close to Minaho's and whispered so Airi couldn't hear.

“But as Airi says, whether that is a good thing or not, I am still a woman of complex emotions.”

Minaho gave her a wry smile as her answer.

“Anyway Airi, how did the Kamidake fare?” Minaho said to Airi, Mikami interrupted her and said.

“That just means I don't trip over my own feeling like Airi does.”

“Hmpf! Well, I'm looking at the data they sent back.” Airi looked at the data for a short while. “For now everything looks good.”

“You should hurry up and go home Minaho, I'm going to go check the hull.” Mikami said, ignoring the sullen Airi who seemed mad at her.

“Oh right, I almost forgot! About the plan you had, now is a good time to go forward with it, let's do it!”

“The plan she had? What is it?”

“Oh yeah! That's right! Now is a good time to finish the preparation... “

“Ok I’ll get on it. However I need to check to see if the scheduling works out.” Minaho started a monitor and started checking a schedule.

“Hey, what are you two doing....? Hey.... Hey!” Like a child begging for sweets or toys, Airi hounded them.

Minaho ignored her and finished checking the data on the monitor and nodded to Mikami.

Mikami thought a bit. “OK then, let's get ready right away.” The two of them quickly headed for the transfer gate.

Chapter Two: Comfort, Consolation, and Hardship

The Kamidake came into its dedicated dock on the outer ring of the academy.

“Everything checks out fine Captain,” said Tennyo, Hakuryo and Erma.

“Well then I'm getting off the ship.” Seina got off and ran toward the dock's control room.

Seina was taken by Tennyo and Erma into a small medical room. The Kamidake could be seen from there. The Kamidake was about to descend into the lower deck aquarium. It was the same sight Seina had seen happen with the ship he rode to first get to the academy.

* * * **Translators’ note: For those who haven't read or forgot, the water is full of nano-machines to fix the ship. * * ***

“Seina, stand here.”

“Oh, right!” Seina went up to the table of biological scanner while looking at Kamidake. Seina received a physical examination and hundreds of questions he answered over a few hours.

“How is he Erma?” Tennyo asked when the questioning was over.

“He's a little fatigued, but everything else is alright with his body and mind. Everything is within tolerance, there are no abnormalities.”

“Okay then!” Tennyo looked at Seina and smiled.

Seina noticed that the Kamidake, which could be seen from the window, had gotten down safely into the aquarium and had been there for several hours.

“It’s okay, the level of technology we have here is far more advanced than those at the general docks.” Seina breathed a sigh of relief and Tennyo let out small laugh.

“Oh, is that maybe because of…?”

“Of course it is Erma.”

“Because it was an unusual case, it was reported quite heavily, but at that time, I didn't know that Seina was involved.”

“Well, he was .....” Suddenly the door opened and someone came in.

“Good morning Seina-chan! At last we meet.”

Tennyo couldn't see the woman's face but her voice was well known by Tennyo.

“Is that?!” The woman hugged her chest up to Seina's head. Seina was initially worried because he had been unable to hold his breath long enough and had been suffocated by a woman's breasts before, but the feeling of her chest was so soft and glamorous that he forgot his worries altogether quite quickly.

“Hey, stop that! What do you think you’re doing?” Tennyo got up and pulled Seina away from her.

Seina looked up to see another Tennyo's face, but there was a crater punched into it and the impact had changed the surface of her skin to a familiar pearl luster.

(Oh, it's just NB) Tennyo had punched NB in the face quite hard after it transformed into her.

She kicked NB again with a lot of force.

“If you really are Airi-sama's invention, then I know you'll be persistent! Even if everyone got together and crushed you, you'd just be rebuilt.” Tennyo said as she approached the NB, she took out something that looked like a black pen.

“Seina, close your eyes for a while.”

“Oh! Right!” Seina closed his eyes.

“No! Don't thrust such things in such places!” He heard the voice of NB Tennyo cry.

Seina desperately covered his ears to block out the sound and thought about something to block it out. A few minutes later, Tennyo tapped him on shoulder. Seina knew it was over.

“Master why did they beat me? I did nothing wrong!” NB jumped into Seina's arms. Erma had turned bright red after seeing what was done to NB.

“I was just running Tennyo's personal data file. What did I do wrong?”

“Oh, that makes it OK since Airi must have made one for you too recently and put it on NB. She made one for me and all of the other girls living with Seina as well.” Erma said.

Tennyo seemed curious. “Oh really? I bet Amane and Gyokuren were amazing right?”

“Yes, but it's kind of funny, Kiriko punched NB just like you did.”

“Well, Airi-sama's character data is remarkably inappropriate for Seina's education.”

“Of course, that's why I deleted all the data from the NB. But everything except the character data was incredibly well made, so everyone saved a copy of it.”

“I'm sorry Seina-chan, but do you mind if I do that too?”

“Huh?”

“I'll keep the simplified version in place instead of the one with the crazy character data that Airi put in.”

“Uhm well, that's kind of uhm ...”

“Eh, why? Don't you want to be a little bit familiar with me before the actual performance?”

“What?! No!” Seina was not at all interested in that. The fact that she suggested it felt like she was making a mockery of Tenchi's mother, Kiyone.

“Oh, don’t you like me Seina?”

Seina didn't know why Tennyo was looking him such a sad look or why she wanted him to practice on NB, and frankly he was afraid to ask.

“He will be doing no such thing! And to keep your data from somehow being leaked I'm deleting it.”

“Awwwww.” Truly Tennyo seemed not to want to run the risk that Airi's all too accurate personal data would be leaked. She just thought that she wanted Seina to use it, but after thinking about it for a while, she deleted the data from NB.

“Well, I know I'm not as pretty as Gyokuren or Amane, but are you sure you don't want it?”

“No, thank you.”

“Why?”

“Umm, that is taking things a big far don't you think? It's just ... Well ... why do you think I would want to practice anything like that?” Seina decided to just finally ask about this situation.

“And, uhm, why exactly does Airi keep putting these on NB?”

“Oh, I see.” Tennyo understood what Seina was embarrassed about.

“Well, from the perspective of an Earthling, it certainly is strange. But Erma, is what I was trying to do so strange?”

“Eh? I think that how you went about recommending it was a bit forced.”

(That's funny for her to say when she tried to give me those friendship folders) Maybe, is this just the natural way of thinking at the Academy? It seemed so to Seina, but he felt a sense of incongruity there.

“Well ... ... if Kiriko knew she would definitely scold you... ...”

“Kiriko-chan, chhh-yeah, I can see that.” Tennyo sat beside Seina and put her hand on his shoulder.

“Kiriko-chan wants Seina-chan's first time all for herself.” Seina turned red and got embarrassed.

“Uhuhuhu, you are so cute Seina. I won't force the subject anymore. I'll ask you again once you get to know more about what it means to go into outer space.”

“Means to go into outer space?”

“It's not a big deal for you now Seina. It's okay if you don't understand. It's okay, because Kiriko-chan is keeping you down to Earth.”

“????” He didn’t understand what Tennyo meant, but he understood that it was better not to judge with his limited knowledge. He also appreciated that it wasn't necessary for him to discuss any more embarrassing topics. Unlike Amane and Gyokuren, Tennyo was a different part of his life.

“Oh yeah, Seina, your teammates called.”

“Huh, you mean Kenneth and Rajau?”

“It's going to take a bit for us to run the Kamidake's checks and maintenance, so tomorrow you're free to go have fun with your friends, and NB can help you find your way to your dormitory so please take your time going home today.” She said as she smiled and gave the adjusted NB for Seina.

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TENCHI MUYO!
Erma moved away and pretended to work as she watched the woman. She had blonde hair, brown skin, and blue eyes. She was wearing optical camouflage similar to Kiriko's when she fought Tarant's pirates. Her hair was shorter than Amane's, and just from her gestures, it was apparent that her whole body was like a mass of springs.

“Yes, but what about Kiriko?”

“They have their own jobs to do. Its fine, they already know your schedule. Please take your time going and coming.”

“I understand.” Seina bowed and went out of the room with NB.

A woman at Tennyo's side dropped her subspace camouflage and materialized.

(I saw her earlier ... ... is she a Kuramitsu?) Erma thought as she put some distance from her, she observed the woman while pretending to work. The woman with blond hair, brown skin, blue eyes, was wearing clothes like Kiriko had worn when she fought Tarrant. Her hair was cut short like Amane's, and her entire body was incredibly springy to the point that it bounced from even a small gesture.

(She looks like one, but ...) The reason that Erma judged her as part of the Kuramitsu family was not only her appearance but also her atmosphere that was charming even though she had on a serious expression. She had the same atmosphere as Seto and Airi who were both the most elite of the top class. Eventually she finished her work, she stopped and smiled at Erma.

“!!!” Just like a fan being stared by a star, Erma turned bright red and froze up. She could not remove her eyes from the woman's gaze. Her blue eyes sucked her in.

“Thank you.” The woman smiled and said to Tennyo, then she disappeared into subspace again. Erma, who had been sucked in, felt off balance as if she had vertigo suddenly and she hurried to put her hand on the edge of the console.

“Oh, that ... who was that just now?” Erma stared at the direction where the woman had disappeared. She was overwhelmed.

“Shit, I understand.” Tennyo hit her on the shoulder.

“I'll tell you in a bit, are you okay?”

“Ha ha, yeah. What was with that talk you gave a little while ago?”

“Hey Erma, when are you going to give Seina the birds and the bees?”

“Probably not for a while.”

“It that so? Don't you think it's about time? Seina couldn't even understand what I was saying to him. How is he going to know about all the different customs that various people have here?”

“It's not that big of a deal, Seina is still a minor anyways. Besides, I'm afraid of Kiriko ... ...”

“But what if Airi tries to do it first?”

“Well, that is a valid concern, you may be right.” Erma said.

“Well then, go ahead and do it.” Tennyo pushed Erma's shoulder like one would push a button, and returned to work.

*** * * Translators’ note: Remember this is 1994. Seina didn't grow up having the internet and has only seen nudie magazines Kai showed him. Don't forget how much our ease of access to that kind of information has changed since then. * * ***

Seina took NB and went back to the Academy Planet for the first time in several months. It was still early in the morning when he arrived from the outer ring to the transfer port at the GP Academy.

“Ooo ooo, Seina! Here, here!” Kenneth and Rajau were waiting for him in the back of the small parking lot of the building with the transfer port. Seina was pulled into a small air car by Rajau.

“Okay, let's go!”

“Waaaah!”

Seina's body was pressed against the rear seat of air car which suddenly sped off roughly.

“Don't be unhappy Kenneth!”

“Haha, but we only have one day together! We can't waste a single moment,” Kenneth smiled. Once he was accustomed to the inertia, Seina got up and sat down properly in his seat. The roof of the air car opened, and the smell of cold wind and damp trees in the morning came in.

“Kenneth there is a patrol car one kilometer behind us.” NB approached Kenneth and said.

“What! Why are they out this early in the morning?”

A few seconds after Kenneth dropped his speed, the GP patrol car approached. In it was Officer Carroll and Officer Amelie, the officers they had encountered the night when they escaped from the dormitory.

”Hey! You're those brats!” Officer Carroll shouted as she hung out from the back window.

She noticed Seina in the back seat. “By George! That's Seina Yamada!”

“Oh!” Officer Amelie who was driving, pulled Officer Carroll into the car, and made a sudden screeching U turn and sped off in the opposite direction.

“God damn it, I hate you brats! We'll let you go today but keep to the legal speed!” Officer Carroll shouted over the car's loud speaker as they ran off quickly.

“Who was that woman?”

“Ha ha! That violent voice can only be that policewoman who fired at us when we broke out of the dorm that one time.”

“Oh, I nearly forgot about that. I'll never understand people like that.” Kenneth and Rajau laughed, Seina next to them knew the detailed circumstances and so he was looking at the GP patrol car that ran away with a slightly awkward look.

“Well, it can't be helped.” The wind hit Seina's face and he stopped and took a deep breath, he could smell the ocean as the trees and mountains that covered the landscape disappeared behind him. A city appeared in Seina's field of vision.

“Wow!” It was city 773. The city that they went to that one night to go to the Imuim party. The city shone of silver as a result of the morning sun hitting it and it had a different beauty about it than it had when they saw it at night. They arrived in the city and got out of the air car in a parking lot at the base of the outside of a monorail station where they took an elevator to the upper floor.

“Seina, here it is!” Rajau said. He went through the ticket gate and jumped onto the monorail that had stopped at the very end.

Before Seina's eyes, was a monorail car that had no car body visible where it was supposed to be, and so the blue sky and sea were visible all around.

“Ah!” Seina reflexively touched the handrail near the entrance with his hand. CRACK! The handrail broke, and Seina remembered the feeling of being thrown into the air. But, he felt a loud noise and a dull pain to the head, Seina's body stopped suddenly.

“Oh, did you do that?”

“Well, this is Seina's first time getting on something like this,” Kenneth and Rajau laughed.

“Oh, is that?” Seina looked around and noticed that the car frame was made out of an invisible material and wasn't just an open platform like he had thought. He had hit his head on the invisible walls of the car. Underneath him the base of the city and sea which was making white waves was visible.

“Oh!” The glass was so transparent that it couldn't even be judged whether it existed or not. Seina held in his fear of falling over and retreated away from the wall.

“Seina, over here.” Rajau pulled Seina’s clothes and sat him on a seat on the entrance side wall, while the monorail started to move.

“A ha ha, I was just surprised that's all.”

“This is the quickest route to where we're going. How is it, isn't the view nice?”

“It's pretty nice.”

“Since there are so many buildings near here, flying is prohibited. So this is all scenery that you can't see unless you ride this car, plus its high up. So it's quite a thrill.”

“It runs 24 hours a day. Sunrise, sunset and the late night city-scape is also very pretty, and so it's also a nice date spot.”

“Oh, it certainly feels nice.”

The monorail was spirally circling towards the center of the city. Now, land was visible in front of Seina, and the buildings were visible at his feet.

“I can certainly feel the height,” Seina said, looking down. The monorail stopped at various stations on the way before it arrived at the last stop. There was only a very simple gate at the station.

As he passed through the gate, a large symmetrical garden filled with white domes appeared in front of his eyes. (Is this a cemetery?) Seina intuitively thought. A severe air flowed in that place, and it felt isolated from the hustle and bustle of the urban area.

“Seina, let's go.”

“No.” Rajau, and Kenneth, started walking towards the dome with a somber appearance. Seina felt from their atmosphere that his guess was correct.

“I don't know how things go on your planet Seina, but most of the people on the Academy have solar burials.” Rajau said quietly.

“Solar burial? So their remains are?”

“Well, if the sun is you tomb, then those on the planet... No, no matter where you go in Galactic Federation space, you can almost always see it.”

They climbed the stairs and entered a large dome shaped building with a domed ceiling. It was somewhat dim inside. However, on the ceiling many stars were visible. The sun of the academy also appeared as a big sphere. And there were people there praying at the stars.

“Oh!” Kenneth and Rajau simultaneously said. Miki's teammates Miranda and Caliche, were there looking up at the Academy's sun while saluting, the boys were behind their line of sight. Seina who saw them realized that this was a memorial for Miki. Seina stood next to Miranda and saluted the sun of the Academy in the same way.

Miki was not buried in the sun, the bodies couldn't be collected from the incident on the space station. So the survivors and friends of the deceased decided the sun should be used as the grave marker of each deceased person.

Seina thought of what he would like to say to Miki, but decided that Miki who was energetically positive and optimistic, wouldn't want him dwell on it but rather be determined for the future.

(... I'll do my best!)

After finishing his prayers, Seina talked with Miranda in the outside garden about the recent situation. They were relieved that Seina was doing fine, and they were very pleased to hear he had become a Captain. And he learned from them that Miki's father's lab had been repaired and that he had been invited to work with a prestigious research team.

After getting re-acquainted with Miranda and Kaliche, he had to leave to prepare for practical training. Seina's friends waved goodbye as they left to get on the monorail until they disappeared from sight.

“They sure are busy.”

“Well they have already concrete plans for themselves after graduation, they have to finish practical training and become professionals accordingly.”

“Hey, should we have gone with them?”

“That's the way to the first train station, we have other places to go.”

Kenneth went down the stairs to the parking lot. There was a very ordinary vehicle parked there. As Seina got in, the vehicle started to move without a driver.

“Hey Rajau, is there really a soul?” Seina asked Rajau sitting beside him.

“Soul?” Rajau looked at him with a strange look. Seina realized that the concept of a soul was an Earth thing.

“Oh, that is, uhm, how should I explain? The thing that lives inside humans, even if the body dies, it stays around.”

“You mean like reincarnation?”

“Yeah something like that.”

“That's a common concept in the early civilizations. But, it's not quite like that.” Rajau said in an ambiguous way.

“Huh?”

“I don't know how it's thought of where you come from Seina, but what you call a soul sounds like what we call an Astral here.”

“An Astral?”

“I don't know much about it, and indeed, it seems that there are various problems with the subject, the research on it hasn't advanced so much.” Rajau looked at Seina for a bit.

“To that extent, there are times when what we do know conflicts with the views of various religions.” Rajau said with confusion. It was like the conflict between the flat Earth and center of the universe theory and the round Earth and sun in the center debate of the Middle Ages on Earth.

“I have no such problems, so it's okay.”

“Is that so?” Rajau started talking on the subject. “There is also the theory that we are present in almost all dimensions, and there is a thing called the Astral Sea that overlaps every dimension. Changes in this world cause changes to the Astral Sea whether it’s natural formations, or when substances are formed in our world, or organisms are born, it seems that similar places are formed in the Astral Sea, whether they are people or substances, memories are recorded of them in the sea such as that things experiences or personality.”

“Like it's stored in memory?”

“Yes, and when the person here dies, the thing disappears, but the memorized things remain in the Astral Sea without disappearing. That was the cause of the idea of reincarnation because there is a memory feedback phenomenon that happens due to similarity of the Astral form.”

“Can you read that memory? Is there another person born with it?”

“In other words, each individual Astral is sort of the same thing as a blood type or your genes, but that's what, actually, please take it from here Rajau.” Kenneth was trying to show off his knowledge, but he could not put it in clear words and so he backed off.

“Yes, yes, but the Astral form is far more complicated than the combination of the base sequences of DNA, so we don't really know the rules that govern it just yet, but we do know that a small part of the Astral form is used like an access terminal that intersects the Astral Sea and I think that it is easier to understand if you think of it like a modem connecting to a network. Accordingly, Astrals can share similar parts even just very slightly, but as for the memory that I mentioned earlier, the memories of the Astral Sea will remain even if the body disappears. Memory feedback sometimes occurs and the memories of the past life occurs because of this memory feedback.”

“When you think about it, the Astral Sea may be said to be the world after death.”

“To be sure, the Astral Sea has the memories and personalities of all the lives that the Astral had been born into so far, so Kenneth, what you said, wasn't a mistake.”

“Really……”

“However, it is impossible for someone to revive a certain person,” Rajau said as if he had read Seina's mind.

“Eh?”

“Even cloned individuals do not have the same Astral pattern as the original, there's nothing even similar about them, and it is relatively easy to measure the Astral pattern, but the problem is you need tremendous energy to reproduce and fix it in to another body. Although with organ transplants, memory feedback can occur pretty easily.”

“Maybe if you were a God you'd have a chance.”

“Eh?” It was an unrealistic thing for him to say. Seina checked to make sure that Kenneth's face was serious. Rajau shrugged his shoulders with a wry smile.

“That's not a joke.”

“Eh?”

“There are plenty of theories as to why the Astral Sea was made and how it was created. Washu Hakubi theorized that the Astral Sea was made to be a ‘system to create God’.”

“God?”

“There are memories from space and time since creation in there, there is no guarantee that scientific technology has reached its highest peak now at the current academy. Somewhere else in the universe, or maybe in prehistory there may have been more advanced civilizations. The Astral Sea has all of those memories and it's definitely ‘omniscient’.”

“Certainly, I suppose it would be ... ...”

“So there are many people trying to use the knowledge in the Astral Sea right now. When they become able to freely read the memory from Astral Sea, which has stored everything that has happened in the universe from the past to the present, it will be of unlimited value to us. Right now we can't even imagine what the future is past a simple simulation level of prediction.

“Sadly, those who are trying to do that aren't really friendly with each other.”

“I don't know for sure but it is natural to think that the Astral Sea, an aggregate of knowledge, has some sort of will of its own, don't you think?” Rajau noticed a wryly smiling Seina.

“Sorry ... is somewhat funny?”

“Funny?”

“Ha ha ha. Maybe Seina is just surprised to get such a strangely scientific answer to such a theological question.”

“Ah, I see.”

“I'm sorry, it’s just a lot to take in.”

“Yeah, well, although the deceased's consciousness and memory are stored in the Astral Sea, their death is irreparable.”

“Okay.”

“In the meantime, this place serves as a place of prayer for us to reaffirm our purpose and attitude as a members of the GP, and to hope that they will return in the next life as a human being.”

“I see.”

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The monorail arrived at the station. Kenneth and Rajau got off with Seina and headed to the city.

Seina was taken by Kenneth to a familiar coffee shop. That was where he had first come across Widow. “First of all, let’s celebrate being reunited safely!” Kenneth and Rajau clinked glassed.

While drinking cold juice, Seina looked around. The city was completely repaired and while there were scars from what had been destroyed, he didn't see any dust or rubble.

“By the way Seina, how's the Captain business?”

“Even if I'm a Captain, it's a very simple route, I'm basically just testing the ship.”

“Still that's awesome.”

“It's training only, you never know about the future.

“So modest! It's not every day one gets to skip training and become a Captain.”

“Yeah! You're doing a great job Seina.”

“Thank you.”

Kenneth and Rajau were pleased with Seina, which made him happy.

“And we won't be able to spend another day like this together for a while so let's party hard!”

“Oh! Let's go somewhere fun with Captain Seina, you're paying!”

“What.”

“Of course we will also pay a little! But you can treat us right?”

“For example, you can start by getting us in here.”

“Oh yeah! This is where they held the Imuim party! I hear there accepting new members now!” Kenneth handed him a fancy pamphlet he had gotten from the front desk. Looking at the entry fees and the annual membership dues written on it made Seina a bit dizzy. The admission fee was enough to buy a few luxury cars and the annual fee was enough to buy a house.

“Hey, I don't have such an inconvenient amount of money. And I haven't even gotten paid yet.”

“Is that so? Aren't you special though? How have they not paid you yet?”

“I don't have it!”

“Damn, what the hell”

Kenneth broke the pamphlet, and he was so disappointed that he slumped his entire body in depression. “Well, we will just have to wait until Seina's salary comes out.”

“You're joking, right?” Instead of answering Seina's question, Kenneth began to think about something while looking away from Seina.

“By the way how much is Seina's salary?”

“I don't know ... they haven't told me.”

“What? Did you accept the job without hearing their offer?”

“There was no choice, they gave me no other options.”

“Oh I know Master's salary!” said NB who had been silent for such a long time everyone forgot it was there. It got on the table and presented the amount. Kenneth and Rajau, opened their mouths in amazement.

“You lie ... . That’s more than three times our pay rate!”

“You have that much?”

“It's not that much is it?”

“That's right! It's only three times as much as the bottom guy!”

“What do we have to live for in the future? Even if we become a Captain, our salary will only triple.” Kenneth and Rajau looked like they were about to cry.

“This is just the basic pay. There are various fringe benefits and allowances and bonuses are often given based on performance.”

“Is that true?”

“Well yes, Master is still a trainee, so I guess it doesn't matter all that much.”

“What? Oh, is Imuim doomed to forever be just a dream?” Kenneth leaned against the chair as if he was going to collapse again.

“I don't have any interest in “Imuim” and I have to live on that salary when I get it so I can't waste it.”

“How can you have no dreams, wasting money is a privilege of youth!”

“I can't afford to do that, besides what if I get hurt.”

“Well I guess it can't be helped when you consider Seina's special situation.”

“Well then..... I suppose we’re going to have to spend the day as poor students like we originally planned. Seina, you didn't actually get to come here from school with us all that much, so there are plenty of places you don't know about right?”

“Right! Let's show him all the cool spots!” Kenneth recovered quickly from his disappointment. He drank the rest of his juice and dragged Seina with him as he left the coffee shop.

Students' way of enjoying things were not much different in space from how they were on the Earth. They checked out their favorite stores and ate at a cheap restaurant in a back alley, and talked about eating and shopping. And hitting on girls they met on the street.

Seina was walking through the labyrinth like city while eating a frozen dessert similar to ice cream that he had bought at a stand, when he came to a square where several terraces were installed in big trees. They sat on a vacant bench and licked the frozen dessert with empty eyes. In other words they were sad that their attempts to pick up girls had failed.

“I thought this was supposed to be a happening place to go. No way, is this cause of Seina?” Kenneth sighed.

In this city, which was near the GP Academy, many people knew about Seina. And the riot caused by him, so there weren't many people trying to approach them. When sunset over the city started and night was on its way, there would be some people who would've loved to get close to Seina, but unfortunately for them it was still early morning.

“How about you, why are you being so gloomy? That's why girls aren't flocking towards us.”

“Yeah, if you put on a bright smile I bet it would reverse your probability vector and our success with the ladies will increase!”

“Oh yeah, don't forget Seina, you’re famous!”

“Thanks for the first half of what you just said.” Despite their words of comfort he was still feeling gloomy.

“Maybe if they see us already with someone they will be drawn to us! Hey Seina did you ever figure out if NB could transform?”

“Yes, NB can do that.” He remembered his interaction with NB Tennyo the day before.

“Oh then it has deforming features! Let's transform it with some personal data!” Kenneth said.

“Hey Seina, do you know how to use it?”

“No, I haven't used it. I just figured you'd know how to.”

The two of them slid up to him and looked at him slyly.

“Come on, you can tell us. Who did you turn it into, Professor Amane or maybe Ms. Kiriko?”

“Why do you assume it was someone I live with?”

“Oh? Was it someone else?”

“STOP IT!” Seina shouted to push the two back. Their hounding ceased.

“Chicken!”

“There are some people who have asked me to use their personal data, but for me it's kind of strange.”

“Why? You're just using it to study them.”

“I understand what you mean somehow, on Earth when we do that we use pictures.” Seina said shyly. Kenneth and Rajau looked embarrassed.

“Seina kun, we’re sorry for being insensitive toward your probability bias. You don't know what personal data is used for do you?”

“Huh?”

“I can’t believe it!” Kenneth burst out into tears laughing.

“Huh??”

“Whaaaaaaaaa ~~~! He doesn't know! ..... I'm so glad I've long enough lived to have to explain this to someone ... “

“Hahaha, I remember when my aunts friend gave me hers. This is too funny!” Rajau also laughed hard.

“Rajau, was your aunt's friend pretty?”

“No she was super ugly... ....”

“Hahahaha, poor Rajau!” The two laughed till they cried with their arms on each other's shoulder, the curious eyes of people around them focused on them, Seina was wondering when they would stop.

What seemed like 30 minutes passed before they stopped.

“No Seina, it's not for that. It's so you can learn to separate yourself from your desire and handle a woman right. Basically they’re for dating simulation.”

At least when there given to minors, they attach ethical character software to them so nothing funny goes on. They do it to the ones for women too.”

“Think of it like a fake baby they give you to raise in school to teach you responsibility.”

“The personal character AI is elaborately programmed, but you'll notice fixed patterns after you mess with them a while.”

“The basic program gets monotonous really quickly and it isn't very good looking so people customize it with others appearance and personality data.” Rajau said.

In other words, Tennyo tried to give him her personal data to teach him how to treat a girl. So he wouldn't get bored with the basic program.

(It's still a little unusual though) Seina tentatively concluded.

“So, have you gotten any personal data yet?”

“No ... Well, I didn't accept any, because I didn't understand the way of thinking in this world.”

“Who tried to give it to you...? Kenneth sat up with an interesting expression.

“Was it Professor Amane or Mr. Kiriko? Don't tell me it was chairwoman Airi?”

“What!?”

“Oh, was that the right answer? Ahahahahaha! If she ever offered I'd definitely refuse ... I can't believe she gave you such a thing ..... hahaha !!” Kenneth laughed and banged his fist on the upper part of NB.

“Who would say that kind of thing? Airi is a cute girl!” NB said.

“Oh, are you seriously saying that?”

“Oh, Kenneth this NB is from Airi's workshop, that's probably why it's saying that.” Rajau said.

“Wow, did she really program it to do that?”

“I'm just stating the facts! Airi is a beautiful woman with a good head.”

“Hmm you would say that ...”

“She'd be more attractive if she didn't have such an unreasonable personality.”

Kenneth and Rajau, and Seina nodded deeply at that statement.

Those who heard Seina's conversation nearby laughed. NB could not refute the situation. Rajau's opinion had silenced him.

“So, what are we going to do then?” Rajau asked.

“Haa ... well ... what about that folder I put on NB?”

“Kenneth! That was you?”

“I had to put my collection on there once I saw the material NB was made of.”

“Indeed, it's top of the line.” The two looked at NB with strange eyes and NB retreated a bit.

“Think about it, we can try out the latest technology with this NB! Hey, Seina!” They looked at Seina clearly with indecent thoughts in their head.

“Uhm, well, sadly the data Kenneth put on was found by Kiriko and was deleted ...”

“The whole thing!?”

“... Yeah. All of it.”

Although Erma was actually the one who deleted all the illegal data Kenneth put on there that they wanted to use.

“Damn, well then, access my server and we'll download it back on ...”

“That will be impossible. Since they found it they disabled the software from being launched or installed by anyone without approval of an instructor.” NB said.

“Well, I'm out of ideas then.” Kenneth and Rajau drooped their shoulders.

(I'm glad Tennyo deleted her data)

It was then. On the terrace just above them that he heard someone angry and screaming and heard a leafy crunching sound. Ah, this is bad. Seina thought to himself he felt a great shock to his head and he lost consciousness.

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“Eh?” A woman’s face was in front of Seina and was looking at him when he woke up. She was the woman who appeared in the room when they did the physical examination yesterday, but of course Seina himself didn't know about it. He looked around in confusion before looking away from the woman. As a result he found out that he was sitting on a bed in what looked like a hotel room somewhere, and that the woman looking at him was standing over him. He felt her breasts poke him.

“Are you ok? Does anything hurt?” The woman applied her right hand to Seina's head, and forced him towards her.

Seina said, “I'm okay, I'm ok. Would you please give me a minute of ...? Uhm that's ...”

The woman kept staring at Seina. As she ignored him her weight was barely felt on him even though she was right up on him.

“Uhhhhhm, are you from the Kuramitsu family?” Seina continued talking to her as he was desperate break the tension of this scene. She was beautiful and sexy, like Amane and Gyokuren. But, while something about Amane and Gyokuren made him naturally panic, she did not.

Seina figured it must be a natural thing since Mitoto and Mihoshi had both always failed to be detected by Seina's crisis avoidance instinct.

“Uhhhhhhh.....!” he said louder, but the woman paid him no mind.

“Huh? Oh, sorry.” The woman finally noticed and slowly and gracefully left Seina and sat down in a chair nearby. The now liberated Seina quickly raised his upper body, hiding his lower half with a soft comforter. He had to get some distance from the lady.

“Where are we and who are you?”

“There's no reason to be shy boy, if I was going to do anything with you I was already in a position where I could have done it.” She said ignoring Seina's question. She stared at his lower body and smiled.

(She kind of reminds me of Airi or Seto) Seina thought.

The woman noticed his expression.

“I'm sorry. I guess I should explain the situation.” She began to talk with a strong and passionate voice. “Seina, the reason why you fainted was that I was fighting a man who was following me and I accidentally hit him too hard and he fell out of the tree and fell on top of you.”

“Oh okay, that makes sense. But why did you take me here? In most cases like this, I usually wake up at some hospital.”

“Well Seina, your NB told me to take you here so it could check to see if you had a concussion. So don't worry.”

“Is that so ... ... but uhm ... ... where is here ...?” Seina looked left and right for clues in his line of sight as to where he was. From how the room was decorated it looked like a “Love Hotel” but he knew that it only looked that way by the Earth standards. It might just be a normal hotel, the universe sure is weird.

“It's just what you think it is Seina ♡” The woman shattered his expectations and left him pale as she smiled.

Seina regained his composure and quickly tried to run to the exit. However, the woman sensed his intentions and quickly seized him with a hug.

“Your response is valid, but you should do a little more to hide the intentions, and it's not always the best idea to take the route that is the shortest distance. Seina you should know that.” The woman said in Seina's ear. Seina tried to get away again but she threw him on the bed.

“Waaa!” Seina thought that the woman was going to get on top of him again so he pulled the comforter back over him, but instead she began to talk without getting closer to the bed.

“How's everything going over there?”

“He's going fine. I have him safely contained. Someone's on their way to bring him some food.”

“Hakuren?” He recognized the person’s voice who was calling the strange woman. He realized he was ok and let out a sigh of relief.

“Okay, thank you for your patience.” The woman ended communication and looked at Seina, a bit frustrated.

“You sure seem relieved, have you finally worked up some courage.”

“Eh?”

“You know it's just the two of us in here, there's no need to be so tense.” She moved to sit close beside Seina and posed to provoke him.

“Now, what do you plan to do with me?” (If this was Airi I would be panicking, but I don't think she is serious, she doesn't feel like a serious threat.) Her smell and appearance were perfect. He felt like he had wandered for days without water in the desert, and she was an oasis. He was stunned.

“Uhm, I ... ...”

He wanted to rush in search of water, he repressed that impulse desperately. Something about her was keeping his survival instincts from kicking in like it did with the other girls, he could have run right past her out of the room but the thought didn't even come to his mind.

“Huhuhu, I'll forgive you for making that face.” The woman said happily as Seina got sweaty and blushed, the woman got up and went out of the room.

“Huhu.” He didn't know for sure but he felt like the crisis had passed.

However, while Seina was relieved, at the same time, he also had mixed feelings of disappointment. He took a deep breath to calm himself and when he finally feeling calmed down he realized that he was still completely unaware of where he actually was.

“How are you doing?” Suiren said. She had been standing in the room for a while. He lifted up his face to see her and was surprised.

“Aaaaah!” Seina jumped up and fell out of the bed. Fortunately, the floor was covered in a fluffy carpet, so there was some shock but he didn't feel any pain.

“Are you okay?” Suiren said as she came over to the bed and looked at Seina anxiously.

“Oh no, it's okay, you just surprised me. I didn't notice you were there.”

“I'm sorry I surprised you, I said hello a few times.”

“It's okay, I was a bit distracted. How long have you been here Suiren?”

“Since Seina-sama woke up.”

“That long?” Seina thought back to everything he saw since he had woke up, but he couldn't find a trace of Suiren's figure in his memory. “The whole time?”

“Yes, the whole time, see that?” Suiren showed Seina his folded uniform. “I was washing it for you in the bathroom.”

Only after seeing that did Seina realize that he was wearing something like a yukata.

“It was easier to check on your health without it, but your uniform's self-cleaning features seemed to have malfunctioned. It was pretty dirty so I laundered it.” Suiren gently placed the folded uniform in front of Seina. With a look of embarrassment on her face, she went into the washroom and closed the door.

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That was dangerous, so dangerous. The woman who was with Seina earlier had escaped to another room, she leaned against the wall and exhaled a big breath of air. Her face was flushed and she was sweating bullets. She seemed even more upset then Seina.

“You jackass! What the hell were you doing in there!! And why do you look like you’re going to vomit?”

Please don't vomit.” Airi's voice came out of NB as it rushed to the woman, her face came on the NB which began shouting in the woman ear.

“I wasn't doing anything.”

“Oh really? Maybe I should tell Kiriko? 'Yo! Everyone, Mikami Kuramitsu is a prodigal educator who puts her hands on the students because she has a thing for hot young bodies!'“ NB Airi shouted loudly towards the operators who were in the room behind her. “Oh yeah! It's true I'm tellin’ ya! And then I'm gonna tell Seto, Mitoto, and even her brother*, and Kiriko, I'll tell everyone!”

* * * **Translators'' note: *Mikami's brother not Mitoto's. * * ***

Mikami seethed in anger but kept her cool. She thought about what had come over her, and remembered what Widow had said to her about Seina.

“Mikami-sama!” While Mikami thought about it, NB's voice changed. For a moment, she thought that it was might have been Airi's doing, but then she noticed NB started deforming, she hastily set a privacy field around them.

“I'm glad you managed to shut off Airi-sama's connection, but you can't expose your figure to the public so carelessly, Kirche.”

NB shaped itself into Kirche who began crying. “Really but you and Seina and... With Seina...”

“You know I can make Airi come back real quick.” Mikami suspected Airi was using Kirche so she would tell her the truth. Kirche was like a cute puppy calling to a dog lover.

“Don't worry, I'm not planning to do anything.” Mikami gently placed her hand Kirche's head and petted her.

“Okay!” Kirche obediently believed Mikami's words and nodded like a safe child. Mikami stroked Kirche's head for a while.

(Kirche, I don't plan to participate in the fight over Seina, but in the future when the dispute is settled, I don't intend to avoid crossing that road with him.) She thought in her heart. (Perhaps, no I have no doubt, Seina will get a high level adjustment like me and Airi.)

(If that happened, he would live a least tremendously time, at least tens of thousands of years. That amount of time shapes a person in various ways. Especially in matters of love. If they’re not careful, one thing can lead to another and while they might not necessarily separate they can easily lose trust in each other and forget how to communicate with each other. That was what Tennyo tried to explain to Seina. Either way, I'm going to keep from getting stuck in this situation for now.) As Mikami was thinking about such things, Kirche looked up at her with eyes filled with tears.

“Oh, Mikami-sama. Actually I have something to talk to you about.”

* * *

“AHHH, that bitch ~~~!” Airi yelled while slamming her hands on the desk in the president's office room. “I was stupid to expect results from a girl like Kirche!”

Minaho blushed in embarrassment as she showed Washu a monitor feed of her mother.

“Hmm, I see. She fell into the cracks of a dubious investigation into Seina, and forgot all about how she planned to leak Seina's family's information to a spy at the academy.” Washu said in a tone of slight criticism.

Airi had forgotten to tell Washu that the plan had been carried out. Moreover, Washu was originally supposed to talk to Airi, not Minaho.

* * * **Translators' note: Remember, Washu's existence is a secret so this scene is here to clearly establish OVA 4 has passed as Minaho would not have known of Washu's survival before OVA 4. * * ***

"Boooo...." Washu raised her right thumb and turned it down.

DONG! A heavy thick gold washtub pan fell from the sky with a loud noise on Airi's head. Airi fainted and collapsed on the desk.

* * * **Translators note:**

AHAHAHAHA, SHE ACTUALLY MADE IT! HELP, I'M DYING! It was just a passing joke from a few books ago but she actually made it. * * *

"I apologize for the trouble." Minaho bowed.

"Well, I got to test that out so it's not all bad ♡"

"That's why I'm sorry, I'd like to ask for you to ensure Seina's family's security and interception of the enemy."

"Hmmm I don't want this to get out of hand. I can think of ways to wrap this up very easily, but, should I not use Ryoko?"

"I leave the selection up to you."

"Huh, well I should make this amusing at least."

"Oh, also, what are you doing with that child on your shoulder?"

Minaho previously remembered that Washu had changed the upper part of her shoulder to crystal and sealed the Astral of Widow in it.

"Oh, I am in the final stages of putting it in the eggshell."

“That was quick. It was just yesterday that you started carrying it around on your shoulder Washu.”

“It's a shame, I wanted to get to know her a bit better before I sent her off. It's not every day I have a new child.” Washu regrettably stroked her shoulder that was made of crystal.

“As for the ship main body, I completed the third stage of its growth in a culture tank. As soon as the prototype ship's test data comes in, I'll make my final adjustments. And then I can hand it over at any time.”

“!!” Minaho felt goose bumps appearing all over her body.

A new ship from the legendary philosopher Hakubi Washu. The sister ship of “Ryo-Ohki” who had the same power as Jurai's Royal ships and successfully invaded Jurai was going to be born.

“Is this really okay with Seto?” Minaho let out a sigh.

“Uhuhuhu, it was Seto-dono who said I should build the best ship I could.”

“Miya! “Ryo-Ohki hopped up and put her face on Washu's shoulder.

“What? What's up?”

“Miaa miah!” Ryo-Ohki seemed happy, and was talking to Washu's shoulder.

“Don't mind her she is just talking to that girl.”

“That girl?”

“Hmm? Ryo-Ohki, that's your sister ... what kind of child do you think she will grow up to be?” While embracing Ryo-Ohki, Washu laughed. “I'd be happy if she grow up to be just as nice and good as Ryo ....”

“Ryo is nice and obedient.” That meant that it would be more convenient to make her work for Jurai.

“But you never know, Seina attracts various troubles, even if it's just his ship becoming cranky.” Washu sang it a nursery rhyme which ended in a rhyme about how Minaho was an old maid.

“Well, that's true, it's looking more and more like I won't ever be a bride.”

“It's strange. Do you even really want to be a bride?”

Minaho was a woman who would make a good wife and Washu had seen that she had many good motherly qualities.*

* * * **Translators’ note: Wow, OVA 4 spoilers in 2010, when it came out in 2018. That's some buried referencing. * * ***

She was competent and quiet, and had a soft tenderness to her that was well-liked by men and women. However, her position as Seto's deputy officer kept all cowardly men away from her, and all competent men respected her too much, she was doomed to be a single woman.

“Of course! I just have to get married in my free time.”

“So, when is that?” Washu asked.

“I have no free time.” Minaho muttered sadly.

“Well, I also have been single now for over five thousand years if it makes you feel better.”

“I appreciate it, but that's a special case, it's not any consolation!”

“Ah ha ha, well that is the case. But won't Seto train a successor for you eventually? Once that happens you won't need to take care of Seto, alone. You should retire when that happens.”

“Considering the difficulties in training a good successor that seems too irresponsible.”

“Well I still think you should consider it.”

“If Rea-chan has a boy, do you think she will let him be betrothed to me?”

“Sorry, that child's fate has already been decided, he's a human sacrifice.”

“Oh, is that so? I'm sorry, I shouldn't ramble on about my complaints.”

“Well I wish you luck.”

“Miah.” Washu picked Ryo-Ohki up off of her by her forefoot, and then she waved bye-bye and turned off communications.

She couldn't imagine Ryo-Ohki understanding their conversation, but the cabbits smile made Minaho's heart feel slightly warm.

* * *

Kirche, NB and Mikami were sitting to face each other on the sofa in the same room as before.

“That reminds me, I found a public email from your father.”

Public e-mail was like a message board. When you didn't know the recipients destination, it could be posted with an encryption that only the other party could decrypt.

“It's titled ‘Living in your own way’, so ...”

“So?”

“I thought it would be a good idea for you to read it.” Mikami said while diverting her eyes.

“Is it encrypted?”

“No, it's open.”

“I see.”

Since Kirche, who was an idol, had disappeared, a lot of speculation on why she disappeared had spread in the streets. But after a while everyone came to the same conclusion, it was probably because her creator was trying to make her his own wife and she had escaped.

The open mail was a declaration of him waiving his ownership of her to fend off public criticism.

“Kirche ..... every child must someday become independent from their parents and your father seems to think that you will never come back again.”

“Oh? Does that mean that my father is still mad at me?”

“Once you have nested, you must keep on living on your own. Your father is convinced that you have left and that's going to take a lot of time for him to accept. Don't look back on your father's feelings, you have to give him time to accept them.” Mikami said to Kirche.

“Yes, I understand. Thank you.”

“By the way Kirche, I'd like to ask you a question if it's alright with you.”

“Yes, what is it?” Kirche raised her face with a nervous look.

“How is life going with Seina? What are you doing now? You don't have to push yourself if you don't want to tell me about it.”

“Ah, well, I've stopped having him visit on a nightly basis.”

“Did something happen?”

“No, Seina always makes me happy, and I'm really happy ...”

“But?”

“It seems like useless time for Seina, so I started thinking ...” Kirche looked down to think a bit.

“I'm Seina's NB, too, I began to think that there are many other things that I can do for Seina. Fortunately, this NB is very high performance, so the things I can do are quite substantial. I can also access lots of high level data using it, so ...”

“So you’re helping Seina study his new environment?”

“Yes, and well, of course, sometimes we meet in his dreams and talk about things too ...” Kirche told her. She was embarrassed.

“That's a very good idea, Kirche.” Mikami admired her and felt a little bit jealous of Kirche. She checked on the status of the operation she was conducting to distract her from that. Her goal was to draw a total of 35 people who were after Seina. All 35 had been captured.

“Hmm, that's some good timing, well then Kirche, I'll need you to return with Seina to the dock on the outer ring soon.”

“Yes, understood ... ... Oh!”

A monitor started by Kirche showed Suiren and Seina hugging each other. Immediately Kirche and Mikami ran out of the room.

* * *

“Are you okay?”

Seina was holding Suiren who had fallen and collapsed onto the bed.

Kirche and Mikami had seen this moment and misinterpreted it.

Unlike Mikami, this was not intentional but an accident. If everything was normal, the two would have separated from each other in a panic. But at this time, even after NB turned back into a ball and came in with Mikami, the two were still embracing ... ... to be precise, Suiren was hugging Seina to hold herself up.

“Master! What is going on in here, are you alright?” NB cried out. Seina stared at Suiren as his face turned red.

“Huh?” Mikami suddenly took NB and placed it gently between Seina and Suiren. And, suddenly Seina returned to sanity, he hurried to try to leave Suiren. However, Suiren's arms and legs had become entangled with his, and he couldn't let go.

“Suiren ......?”At that time, Seina, NB, and Mikami also realized that Suiren was too out of it to let go.

“Boy, for the time being, leave her, I will return soon Seina.”

“Oh ... ... Thank you for understanding about Suiren.” Seina bowed to Mikami who began to leave with NB ... ...

“Oh, that's right, I haven't gotten your name ...” Seina said Mikami slowly turned to him.

To tell the truth, she was enjoying Seina's response to not knowing who she was. But she didn't want any strange misunderstandings to happen with Kiriko if Seina asked her who she was. Mikami was a bit worried, but she looked at him and said. “I was going to tell you at a better time ... but my name is Mikami Kuramitsu.” Mikami said with a bright tone.

“Mikami Kuramitsu!? But, that's ...”

“This is my real body, did you really think I was that old? I'm almost the same age as Seto.” With her hand spread out on her chest, Mikami showed herself off to Seina as if she was boasting.

“Oh, that's right .....” Seina turned red in dismay. The behavior of this Mikami was unimaginable from that Mikami, who always seemed to be an educator who was ideal in both morals and intelligence.

“Did I disappoint you?”

“No ... but ... ... when you compare it to Airi-sama it makes sense, I get it. You have to keep your public and private life separate.”

Mikami who heard that smiled gladly. “Ahahahaha. I would appreciate it if you thought of it like that ... Hey, Seina when you did Bio-Enhancement, what did you think about it compared to how you were before? Were you surprised at how quick you recover from illness or injury? Whenever I get into this body from the elderly body, I definitely notice the difference.”

“Somehow, I understand.”

“Ohohoho but remember, this is a secret to everyone.” Mikami put her forefinger to her mouth and winked. She was glamorous and he was fascinated.

“Well, I must hurry, I have to go.”

“Goodbye.” Seina was taken aback by Mikami's lustrous appearance as she grabbed NB and left the room. NB went to the park to the bench where Kenneth and Rajau were staring at the sunset with a tired look.

“I see your attempts to pick up ladies have all failed.” NB said in an insensitive tone that poured salt on the wounds of the two.

“Is Seina okay ....? I hope he's having a good time with that pretty lady,” Kenneth said with a prickly tone as he watched the sun set.

“There was nothing wrong with him, he was just unconscious for a long time.”

“Well, that's good news. I'm glad he's ok.”

A bell sound rung throughout the city. It was a signal that this district had officially entered the night. From this moment on, the festivities of the night would slowly begin, but for today, it meant the end of the holiday for Seina.

“Oh, well, it looks like it's the end of Seina's vacation. I wish they had approved him for an overnight stay ...” The dormitory had to give special permission for Seina to stay at Kenneth’s dorm overnight and they hadn't, so Seina's vacation was over once the evening started. And of course, Kenneth and others had to go back to the dormitory.

“There is no helping it, all we can do is hope that Seina gets some good rest.”

“I doubt he will get another break like this soon, his training period just ended.”

NB went back to Seina and they headed for the parking lot. Using the reverse of the route they had taken in the morning. Seina came back to his lodgings in the outer ring within an hour of leaving. He entered the living room, the blinds began to open automatically, and Seina fell to the sofa which was illuminated by the light spread out on it. He looked at the time casually, it was still evening.

“Well there's still time for dinner.”

“There's a time difference, do you want to me adjust my schedule for you?”

“No I don't mind... “

Seina raised the upper half of his body to stare out the blinds which were completely opened, the light outside illuminated the large living room brightly. Although it was inferior to Amane's house, it was still a luxurious and wide space.

“What is this room? NB, is this all my room?”

“Yes Master, you're a Captain so they have given you a room fit for one.”

“I ... . I wonder if such a luxury is okay.” He was still just a Captain in training.

“Wouldn't it be better to put me in a room fit for a regular crew member?”

“The Kamidake is a confidential test ship and you need an escort to watch over you at all times, think of this as a way to keep you isolated.”

“So it’s a luxury cage.”

“Don't worry about it, they just want to make sure you’re as comfortable as possible.”

“I guess you're right, for the time being I think I'll take a bath before dinner!” Seina stood up from the sofa and noticed the view from window with the shutters open.

When he had stayed here the day before, he hadn't opened the shutter he had just fallen asleep in bed right away. So he had no time to recognize what kind of place it was that he was given.

“Wow, How Sci-fi...”

The huge outer ring intersected with the dark universe, and under that was a hierarchical building, a waterfall, a lot of trees and flowers were blooming. Not long ago he couldn't have even imagined that he could see such a sight on earth.

Of course he was able to see the superb view from his large bathroom, so Seina ended up taking an unexpectedly long bath before he went back and collapsed on his bed wearing a bathrobe.

“Is everything okay, Master?”

“Uhhm, I think I have luxury sickness.”

“What sort of sickness is that?”

“I'm kidding, it's just that I've been through quite a lot today a lot of things are different now. There's no way that principal Mikami is really like that ...”

Seina remembered the appearance of Mikami while lying on his back in his bed. He compared the young, beautiful and animated figure of her to the figure of the familiar principal he saw all the time. He couldn't think of any similarities besides their skin and hair, but then he realized that the way they both looked at things and smiled were similar.

“As Mikami was saying, this place isn't like where you’re from Master. Here appearance is not really related to age, you can’t judge anything from appearance really, people can change their appearance, gender, sexuality. In the past hundred years age alteration has become popular as fashion or to convey a sense of wisdom. It's practically a necessity for young people in work like Mikami and Airi's. She probably doesn't want perverts fawning over her when she's trying to run the academy.”

“Oh... Is that so ...?”

“It's a way for her to come off as if she has wisdom and should be honored.”

“Oh I see……”

“Master... when you hugged Ms. Suiren... ... what were you thinking?”

“What!?”

After Suiren fell down on him, Seina could not move because of how she had fallen on him. Of course Suiren was surprised. But for more than just that reason.

Suiren has very little presence. She had a thin shadow, he could barely recognize her being there. It was like she was a person on a poorly tuned television rather than being a real person in the room with him. But, that time… Seina stared at his hands. (I felt her heat, and her breathing, the sound of the heart, and her smell.) He was surprised, because he had never noticed any of that before. Indeed she was just like Seto's other female officers, and her proportions reflected that, she was on par with the other girls.

“Did you do it?” NB asked, Seina began to turn red.

“No, shut up. And why does it matter to you!”

“Fine... you can tell me the details later.”

“I wouldn't tell you even then!” Seina got up when suddenly NB launched a monitor with Kiriko on it.

“Seina-chan. It's almost time for dinner ... ... before that I have something I'd like to ask you about, is that OK?” Suiren was sitting on the sofa with a confused face behind Kiriko.

“Uhh ~~~~ ..... Well then I guess I have no choice but to explain this...” Seina replied.

*** * * Translators’ note: This is a summarized version of what happens in this chapter reworded to make it read nicely but briefly, except where the machine spat out good English It's not a direct translation. * * ***

*** * * Editors’ note: And the machine doesn’t often spit out good English! * * ***

Chapter Three: Melancholy

On that day, Ryoko Balta's ship was carrying out periodic maintenance at a private maintenance dock in a space not far from the academy. It was located in a small relay point where GP and major regular flights passed through regularly.

“Captain, the maintenance is ... .” Ryoko's adjutant came into the Captain's room, and noticing that Ryoko was distracted stopped reporting.

“What's the matter?”

“... .... Oh.... I've been thinking about this new type of ship.”

“The ship Yamada Seina is Captaining?”

“Yeah.”

“It’s weird that we had such a thing leaked to us by a spy. You'd think Airi's workshop would have better security.”

“Are you suggesting it was intentionally leaked?” Ryoko smiled wryly at the adjutant.

“This ship is certainly a groundbreaking thing to say the least, it’s mass-producible and it's ridiculously cost-effective.”

A three dimensional figure of the Kamidake was displayed.

“But this ship wasn't intended to act as a single ship ... it was built to be a part of a fleet.

“Yeah, but it's a bit small, isn't it?”

“Well, that is true, it’s only a quarter the size of our ship. If we were to use it as our only ship, it would be quite difficult. It can attack well, but it's too small to drag the containers used by the GP ....”

A container was displayed next to the Kamidake. It was about twice as long in length.

“I see what you mean.”

“Most other commonly used non GP containers are about 80% larger too and there's no custom engine on the market that can fit in such a tiny specialized hull form to overcome that.”

A map of the interior came up.

“There seems to be plenty of room in the internal structure here, couldn't it be modified to put it there?”

“If we did that, then no one would have any living quarters.”

“What if there was a way to keep it useful for daily life and mod it when during work.”

“Even then it would be difficult to operate to for a long time and take a lot of time to set that up, it's a bad idea.”

“I see.... that's pretty troublesome ....”

“The Kamidake is the epoch of making a ship, but technically there is nothing remarkable about it, its strength and balance are wonderful, but this size and shape makes no sense.”

“What if we just make it bigger?”

“Well, if you change the size even a bit, at the worst, you will need to change the fundamental design itself. We made a simple trial calculation, but with just a slight size change we wouldn't be able to use standard sized parts mass produced by the Federation - if we change or customize it in any way we would have to custom make the parts and we couldn't mass production it.”

“So it's kind of just like an expensive toy, isn't it?”

“Even if we leave this shape the size it is though, it should be able to bear having a considerably high-powered engine ... it could withstand one even with the output of the Daedalus’ engine.”

“Really!? ... ... But what about the size?”

“At the moment I can't find the answer ..... Ugh it's just like a bad puzzle. Maybe we can develop an engine with the output of a Daedalus class ship that is miniaturized enough to be mounted on this ship. I wonder if anyone at the academy is developing a compact, high power engine... “

“Even if they were, how would we get our hands on it?”

“You're right, security there is very tight, so far we haven't found any way to get any equipment out. Even if we just obtain the information, we still need the technology to manufacture it. Even a plan to manufacture will require the technology to build it right.”

“Well it's going to be mass-produced, maybe some will end up on the second hand market?”

“It's Jurai's next major ship, I don't expect that.”

“So it's effective for the enemy, a ship that can't be used for piracy ... ... how troublesome...”

“Well, there's a possibility that is even more troublesome.” Ryoko's expression became more severe.

“What's that?”

“Did you forget? The terrible energy generators and computer units Jurai has?”

“The Royal Trees? But aren't they a bit too big as well.”

“It would be impossible for the higher generations, but would it be sufficient to install a lower generation in there, one’s past the 3rd generation probably...”

“We should rush this and notify the higher ups ...”

“It's necessary to investigate the intentions of the other party a little more, and since Seina Yamada is still bug checking it, it's possible that any changes needed to such a mass produced ship would require a crazy amount of design changes for even a minor change. As soon as the maintenance of our ship is over, let's go on a raid. We can see about acquiring new info.”

“Well we've received several repair notices, so I'll let you know later.”

“I got it.”

* * * **Translators’ note: This is novel version of the opening to episode 11 * * ***

Ten hours later Ryoko Balta was raiding a GP transport caravan with a joint Pirate Fleet.

“Energy reaction! Someone is jumping out in front of us!”

This was a raid with different pirates so Ryoko did not have command of this fleet. Normally a ship like the one they were going after would have an escort ship and they wouldn't have bothered going after it. But the economy was booming and there weren't enough escort ships to handle the volume.

“30 medium-sized civilian shipping ships, and 30 escort ships, confirmed!”

“Begin attacking.” Ryoko noticed something odd about the report.

“The Transport ship is detaching! Ah this is a camouflaged ship!”

“What!?”

“Don't wait around to confirm it. That’s the Kamidake! Jump immediately!” Ryoko cried, the next moment the Kamidake jumped out next to the fleet.

* * *

“Enemy jumping out at us at three o'clock! Avoiding!” A big shock hit the bridge.

“Are they Stupid? We could've been killed?”

“Sir the ship is opening fire!”

Both the Kamidake and the pirates were surprised when it began its attack.

“The Kamidake is approaching!”

“What is the squad signal from the commander?”

“I told you to jump! Hurry up!” The ship shook.

“We've been hit!”

“I don't care just get us out here!”

“Is the hyperspace jump ready yet?”

“Alright! Jump program is loaded, we're ready!”

“Jump!” With Ryoko's signal, her ship disappeared into hyperspace.

* * *

“Weren't you just here yesterday?” the guy at the dock asked.

Ryoko's ship was again housed in the private dock that had been servicing them yesterday.

* * *

In Ryoko's quarters her adjutant sighed after finishing the report. “Even though I suspected it from the schematics, that ship has outrageous performance in person, maybe the engine performance isn't an issue after all...”

“... Hey look at this.” Ryoko magnified the previous battle record.

All attacks on the fleet from the Kamidake hit directly near the engine units.

“Wow that thing must be insanely accurate.”

“It's more powerful than I thought ... even for that scale of a ship ... ...”

“They managed to hit all the ship's key points... but don't forget they have you Kiriko Masaki piloting, and the targeting is done by Amane Kaunaq, and the rest of that crew is from the crew of the devil princess herself.”

“So its skill might just be due to its crew?”

“It might be, the Kamidake's attack power and exercise performance are beyond the specifications presumed from the data,” Ryoko said.

“I once encountered a small Juraian fleet vessel a long time ago and it was nothing even comparable to the Kamidake. It's scary to think that small of a ship with a crew that small did this much damage. We should send the Kamidake's data to the higher ups immediately!” Ryoko's adjutant pleaded.

“.....” Ryoko thought about it.

“Captain?”

“I'm worried that might be what they want.” Ryoko stood up frustrated and began walking around with her arms folded.

“After Erma called for the final check of Kamidake, there was a gap in monitoring due to security changes by Yamada Seina's escort ship ... All of this seems too well timed... ...”

“... Did Erma find something?”

“She found out that they plan to give these to smaller countries to alleviate their fears of protection from the pirates.”

“Do you think they know Erma is a spy?”

“We're talking about the Demon Princess of Jurai and Airi... I wouldn't put it past them.”

“Do you think they’re going to use it to go after the Big Da Ruma?”

“Well that would be the best use ... once they have a fleet of these, it’s only a matter of time before they find it even if they keep it camouflaged.”

“Then shouldn't we take this information to the higher ups?”

“No. I will be discarding this data.”

“But Captain!”

“Once a technology like this exists there is no stopping it. Trying will only lead to our doom.”

“But Captain!” The adjutant looked at Ryoko with confusion.

“Don't you understand? Knowing about the Kamidake won't help. We're screwed.”

“..... But maybe we can use it to get the upper hand ...”

“You should know this since you've been with me to the executives meetings for the Da Ruma guild, but there's no way they can do anything now but be destroyed by Jurai. They can't even put up a unified front.”

The guild was built through the charisma of Mr. Da Ruma but recently that had faded, they had gotten too big. Now there were too many factions for him to lead effectively.

“Besides... there's one very problematic member who's a loose cannon.”

“Tarrant .....”

“Giving them this information will only tear the guild apart.” Ryoko said. Her adjutant sighed. He was convinced she was right.

“If you think about it ...that time we met him, you should have offed Mr. Yamada.”

“I stand by my decision not to.”

“But he is a really annoying opponent.”

“I feel bad for him. It's not his fault he has the power to attract us. From Erma's report I've found out that he just has terrible bad luck.”

“Is it really that terrible?”

“I'm amazed, at first I thought it was intentional, but then after a while I concluded it was real. He has horrible luck but surprisingly little damage is ever done to him.”

“What does that mean?”

“One day Erma reported to us that his luck caused 851 cases of minor injuries and 688 cases of serious injury.”

“.....”

“And it's not as if he’s doing anything risky. On the contrary, there were three cases of injuries in areas where accidents were completely unlikely to occur at all.”

“..... Wow ... ... That's amazing, so we were just pulled into his bad luck.”

“That seems to be the case. Our best course of action would be to not get too close to him. But I got off topic, for now the best thing for the guild would be to try to mass produce the Daedalus class ships.”

“Captain!”

“Sorry.” Ryoko apologized like a child scolded by his father.

There was an implicit rule within the Guild. Many executives advocated the mass production of Daedalus, they all ended captured by the GP or died in mysterious accidents.

“Better yet ...” Ryoko tried to talk about a certain possibility, but since it was impossible for them to do, she shook her head and cut herself off.

“Anyway, let's get back to work, we have to account for these unexpected expenses.” Ryoko said brightly. However ... ... The bridge of Ryoko ship was wrapped in tension.

“A ship is jumping out! It is very close to us!”

Such an occurrence was an astronomical impossibility even when one gathered intelligence on someone's route.

“Captain, it's a GP cargo ship judging from the energy to mass ratio!”

“Okay, get ready for capture!”

The Kamidake emerged from hyperspace.

“AAAAH! THAT'S THE Kamidake!?”

“Captain! Preparing jump as soon as possible!”

The operator screamed to match Ryoko's screams as pirate ships came one after the other out of warp nearby.

* * *

“Why? How? We need to gather information to make sure we’re absolutely nowhere near Seina Yamada.” There was no power in Ryoko’s voice of anymore, she slumped in her chair.

This was the fifth time her ship had been docked in the private dock for repairs this month. And every time it was because she encountered the Kamidake.

“Fortunately, all damage this time is minor, so repairs will be completed later today.”

“Fortunately?!” Ryoko looked crankily at the adjutant.

“Sorry, my bad...”

“Well, I have some bad news. This is the estimate for repairs.....”

“... ... Haha... is this a joke...”

“Nope I'm afraid not... ... ... Maybe we should consider working for the GP.”

“.....” Ryoko wanted to cry out loud. She got up from her chair swiftly, and began swinging and striking a cushion for a while.

“How can they ask for that much money? This has to be 200 times what the repairs cost!”

“Well that's just the estimate the shop gave us. We can speak to the mechanic when he returns.”

“What the heck is going on?! Maybe we should just work for the GP.”

“Well... The economy is booming right now...”

She wasn't joking, Space pirates could work at the GP with fake IDs. Of course they were limited to working for the courier service, but even if their identity was somewhat suspicious, once they registered and showed a good work aptitude and seriousness for the job, they wouldn't be interrogated further. It was a good part-time job with plenty of pay raises and frequent payments. For some pirates it was actually their main job.

“It would allow for us to do some reconnaissance and we could pick up the needed money from the GP ..... huh?” Ryoko was getting a call.

“Excuse me.” The adjutant left.

A secret wall surrounded Ryoko making the room dark. Komachi · Kyo appeared.

“Ryoko, an urgent meeting of the executive committee is being convened in three hours.”

“Why...?”

“It's probably because of that boy.” With that Komachi disappeared.

The meeting was just like last time; a bunch of stereoscopic projections of the executives were projected in a U shape in a room that seemed to float in space. A huge silhouette of Mr. Da Ruma was at the top.

“Is it just me or are things getting worse instead of better?” Da Ruma asked angrily.

“Yes ... ... There are still various measures to be taken ... but ... his ability to attract pirates is getting in our way... ...”

“It's almost supernatural, like Mitoto Kuramitsu.”

“Speaking of Yamada... how did your plan go Tarrant?”

“Hmm, yes, you've been bragging about your plan for some time...”

The executives turned their attention towards Tarrant all at once with mockery and a tone similar to contempt.

“Huh?” Ryoko didn't realize that Tarrant was even there. As usual, Tarrant, was barely dressed in thin tattered clothing that was not suitable for participating in important meeting and he had a bad attitude and a bad injury.

“I bet he had his ass handed to him.” Komachi said in a personal communication to Ryoko.

“Jeeze, from how he looks like maybe he encountered the Devil Princess herself.”

“If he had there would be no way she would have let him live.”

“In the information I read, it seems that his ship, the Daedalus was destroyed, but there were no fatal injuries.”

“The Daedalus is gone!? But only Juraian ships can do that ...”

“Well, I don't know who did it, but I defiantly don't want to meet them.” The executives ridiculing of Tarrant continued as they talked in private.

“I heard that you went to the planet Seina Yamada came from based on a story you heard.”

“And then you failed to capture Yamada's parents and take them hostage.”

“Chh... remind me to kill whoever gave you that information.” Tarrant was angry.

“I'd like to speak chairman!” A young man who was waiting next to Tarrant cried out. Normally, other people weren't allowed to enter the executive meeting, but they were permitted on behalf of executives. And it wasn't uncommon for them to speak directly like this.

“I don't mind. I allow you to speak.”

“Thank you. I think it's best to deal with Yamada Seina directly.” The voices of the executives rose all at once as they talked to each other.

“There is the Academy and Jurai all around him, how can we assassinate him?”

“Do you know how many people have been captured trying to assassinate him?”

“Not even Tarrant could kill him!”

“Should we wage all-out war with the Galactic Federation?”

“I have a solution ... Ryoko Balta!” A groan came from all of them when they heard that.

“Fuck off! It's unbelievable that you would try to force your grudge against Seina on others!”

But Tarrant's man ignored Komachi and kept talking.

“There is a trump card in Ryoko's hand ... ... It's called Erma ...”

“That's not information someone of your level has any business knowing!” Komachi shouted angrily. Erma was super confidential information that only the highest people knew of.

“Stop it!” The chairman glanced at Tarrant and then at Ryoko.

“It's certainly the most probable way ... what do you say Ryoko · Balta?”

“Let Erma do it.” With that Da Ruma's silhouette stood up.

“Ryoko Balta ... ... I'm expecting results.” Da Ruma disappeared and so did the rest of the room.

* * *

Light returned in the Captain's cabin of Ryoko's ship, as the secret wall was released. Besides Ryoko there was a stereoscopic picture of Komachi and her deputy manager.

“That asshole... fuck Tarrant ...”

“I'm sorry... ...” The deputy manager pursed his lips.

Prior to the executive meeting, the deputy manager had been informed of what Tarrant knew and also that his family had been taken hostage. A small colony where the family of Ryoko's crew lived was taken over. They and several others were taken away. As a result of that, they had a lot of spies all over the place.

“I have to do it.” Ryoko muttered.

“Are you aware of something? ..... Does it relate to those who were taken away?”

“……” Ryoko silenced herself.

“I have to do it. I have to fulfill my mission.” If she didn't they would be killed.

“Maybe I can pull some strings with the executives. No one likes Tarrant, they may cooperate.”

“Please don't.” Ryoko begged Komachi.

“Oh ... . He's the one who kidnapped them isn't he... that bastard.”

“I can't let him kill them. Everyone else in my crew should evacuate to the Big Da Ruma soon. I have to do the responsible thing.” With that the stereoscopic image of Komachi disappeared.

“I wonder how Tarrant knew about Erma...” Ryoko collapsed, down into her chair.

“Huo Balta was the only one who knew anything about it besides me...”

Huo Balta was a former student of Washu Hakubi's. Erma was able to get into the academy and become Airi's secretary under the pretense that she had been taught by Huo since childhood.

“Is it because of ... . no... then what is it... is Tarrant really targeting me over that? Even if my name is Balta, I have nothing to do with the Balta Guild... although knowing him he probably just wants to watch me suffer... I can't believe he tried to take Seina's family hostage like that... ugh... well... it's been a long day... I should rest...” Ryoko sighed and went up the spiral staircase to her bedroom.

The bedroom illuminated by indirect lighting felt like a large attic. Ryoko took off her cloak and mantle and her boots and gloves and threw them into a laundry closet. And finally she took off her body suit.

”Damn it!” She screamed, as she threw her clothes in the laundry closet. She missed the laundry closet..., she got into her big bed that seemed to be six tatami mats long and got under the covers.

“... ... ...” Ryoko breathed in and out as she laid in her bed, taking off her tight constricting clothes calmed her down a little. She launched a terminal and looked at the

pictures she had taken with her crew and their families. Ryoko's pictures decorated the large bay window in front of her.

“..... Seina Yamada.” Suddenly, Ryoko locked her eyes on one of them. She stared at it and approached the bay window. It was the group photo she’d taken with Seina and Alan when Seina had first come to the academy. Seina, who seemed to be uncomfortable, was mixed in with the excited and happy crew, and Ryoko was smiling as she looked at him.

“……Oh.” At that time, Ryoko noticed that she was the happiest in that picture when compared to the other pictures that decorated there, it was rare for her to show any emotions as a Captain. Since she had become one she had a lot to protect, and Ryoko had always fought to keep emotions from getting in the way. Seina's image began to blur as tear drops fell on them.

Ping – –

Ryoko hid the picture with Seina from her sight as her face burst into tears. She went and laid back in bed. Ryoko didn't understand the meaning of her tears.

Chapter Four: First Month's Salary

The Kamidake ran some tests for the day and went back to port where everyone was paid their first month's salary.

Alan and his people checked theirs and were amazed at how much they made until they saw how much was taken out to pay their debts.

“What's this? We barely have anything left!”

“Ow! What a nostalgic figure ... It’s the same amount as my first ever paycheck.”

The amount they had left equated to little more than a child's pocket money.

Cohen and Barry brushed it off when they realized that their debt would be paid off in a few years with what they were making. But Alan persuaded them to call the person in charge of their pay rate.

“No, there's nothing I can do! Your salary will remain the same until your debt is paid off.”

“Pleaaase!”

“Why don't you try gambling or investing your money?”

“Hmmm maybe... can you lend us the money for that?”

“NO! And if you call me again I'll have you thrown in prison.”

“Prison!? We haven't done anything wrong!”

“You idiots! This communication itself is illegal. You guys are on a communications blacklist.”

“Don't we have a right to get paid?”

“Your debt being paid off is your pay. If you want more, work harder and you'll get bonuses for your captures. Don't call again goodbye.” He hung up.

“Hey! Hey!” They tried calling back but there was no answer.

NB floated up to them

“Hey there, 3 idiot trio-onii-sama, I have an idea! I want to get paid too.”

“Who are you calling a three idiot trio?! The only idiot here is you if you think you’re getting paid. You're equipment not crew!”

But NB convinced them that if they could get Seina to list NB as a crew member and get him paid then they wouldn't be the lowest ranked crew anymore and they would have to get a raise. They

ran to ask Seina but they found Hakuren and Kiriko instead. They were talking to the commander of a squad of about 10 soldiers.

“Alan, Barry, Cohen! You’re being temporarily assigned to the Army! Come with me.” The commander went to Kiriko and saluted.

“Ms. Masaki, It's an honor to meet the demon instructor in person. I will be borrowing these three if you don't mind.”

“Good luck!”

* * *

“Oh, Kiriko. What took you so long?” Amane asked Kiriko when she came to the bridge.

“I sent those three idiots off to be re-educated ... while we do maintenance.”

“It's about time. Those three are as big of fools as Seiryo. Oh, I hear the Army guys call you the demon instructor just now.” Amane smiled. Kiriko turned pale.

“Whatever you do don't let Seina hear that!” Kiriko said with a scary look on her face.

“Fine... Fine... I won't tell the Captain... but there's no need to keep it confidential with me, we’re on a mission even more confidential then what happened on the Rinamiku... unless you just don't want him to remember you covered in blood.” Amane smiled as she poked Kiriko's buttons.

“Uwaaaaaa!”

Kiriko had long tried to keep Seina from seeing that side of her, but he had accepted it. Since then though his dynamic with Kiriko had been less like younger brother and more that of a normal man. Not that seeing her like that was all that lead to that. Seina was her superior officer now after all. But somehow her fear of him finding out had changed into embarrassment because he knew and it changed how she interacted with him.

How cute! Amane had the urge to hug her. Kiriko looked like she was about cry.

Not noticing the conflict between the two, Seina was busy in the Captain's seat watching the monitor, looking at the details of his salary.

(Wow, my salary really is huge) His salary was exactly three times that of Alan's. And like Kenneth had mentioned the other day he had various allowances that the amount didn't count towards, but Seina was just impressed that this was the first salary he had earned by himself.

“Kiriko-san, can I consult you about something for a bit?”

“What is it, Captain?” Kiriko wiped away the tears at the corner of her eye and pretended to be calm.

“I got my salary today ...”

“Whoa, are you going to drink to celebrate?”

“Amane! The Captain is still a minor!”

“Well then, let's throw a dinner party.”

“Oh, that sounds good,” Hakuren, who had been a little ways away came into the conversation circle.

“No, we will be doing none of that. I think you should send the excess to your parents. Would you like me to tell you what the standard monthly living expense is?” Amane and Hakuren who were a bit ashamed from that quieted down.

“... Oh uhm... Kiriko, is Seina's family poor” Gyokuren asked.

“It makes sense if you consider Seina's abilities.” Karen said as they jumped into the conversation. Hakuren by the way had frozen up in a thought cycle.

As usual no one even noticed Suiren existed / wasn't saying anything,

“And when we take into account that you live in Amane-sama's house, and deduct living expenses.”

“Hey now. I don’t think Seina should do that. Let's take the cost of living expenses and allocate them in case of an emergency.”

“Oh, good idea Gyokuren.”

“Oh, what about entertainment expenses!”

“Well, Seina doesn't really have very many expensive hobbies... ...”

“If we give him a budget maybe he can take us out on dates.”

“Seina is still a student, and is under jurisdiction of Airi-sama, Mikami-sama and Mitoto-sama, the only way a date will be allowed is if he is accompanied by one of those three people.”

“That sound's worse than if he was just left to go on his own. What if it were just a trip with a close personal friend?”

“What will he do for clothes?”

“Chirping Sparrow.”

“... ... “

‘Chirping Sparrow’ was a line of clothes that transformed and changed color from a program's input. Seina had two sets.

“What about Medical expenses?”

“Yeah, can't forget those Kiriko.”

“I am grateful to everyone for their concern but ...” Seina said.

“Captain, no, Seina-chan. You don't have to worry about sending money if you don't want to. Business is going smoothly for them.”

“I heard that from a few people actually. I assumed as much as it was always bustling until I came nearby.” Seina hadn't contacted home for a while.

Once he had called his mother though... but she rushed through it and hung up after telling him not to call for a while. He hadn't heard from them since then.

“Besides, we're arranging to send part of your rewards and allowances to them but you should at least set aside everything besides what you would normally need to have for a month, just in case.”

“Okay, I understand.” At that time Seina remembered that his salary was three times that of Kenneth’s. (Well, I guess that's the amount I need.)

Kiriko whispered to Seina so no one else could hear. “Tennyo is waiting for you as usual, please hurry, Captain.”

“Oh, yes! Right away, sorry.” Seina hurried and had his chair take him downstairs.

* * *

“Wow, you almost made it sound like Seina would actually need to save money.”

“I don't want to inform the Captain ..... No, I do not want to inform Seina about the actual amount of his real salary.”

“Oh why? Is Seina the wasteful type?”

“He's been that way since he was child ... ... If he knew the kind of money he had, he would blow through it in an instant, do you know how much Seina's rewards and benefits are?”

“... ... Is it really that much?”

“Well, he already makes 3 times the minimum wage... so how much is it?!”

“Oh, I see. Wow, now that I think of it, he must be loaded, ha ha ha.” Amane said and the rest of them quickly calculated the amount in their heads and nodded as if they were convinced.

By the way, Hakuren's thought loop had been stopped by Karen before this by smacking her on the head as usual.

* * * **Translators’ note: That's how it's worded in the book. * * ***

After returning to the research base, Seina received his usual physical examination before he heard from Tennyo about the renovation of Kamidake.

“Is the repair of the Kamidake going well?”

“Yes, and the amount of test data we've accumulated so far is quite considerable. We have found a variety of problems. We want to test some different equipment add-ons soon as well.”

“Different equipment... Like what?”

“The Kamidake is made to be customized according to the situation it's going to be used for. Currently the ship is just the basic model without any additional equipment. But even with the customization, it looks almost the same, doesn't it?” Tennyo said with a quick glance at Erma. But Erma did not stop her work and remained silent.

“Hey, Erma.”

“.....”

“Erma! Are you listening?” Tennyo raised her voice to Erma, who had a slightly different atmosphere to her than usual that day.

“Oh sorry... What were you saying just now?”

“Never mind...There will be extensive renovations done to the Kamidake this time, so it won't be able to be flown for about a week, you and Erma should go take a vacation now.”

“If it's alright, I'd like to stay and help you with the Kamidake's renovations ... ...”

“There's no need. I'll be fine doing it on my own, besides you need to take a break. You've seemed a bit tired the past few days.” Tennyo gently placed her hand on Erma's shoulder.

“No, that's uhm...”

“Just do it! I got an order from Airi, you are being ordered to take a break and rest.”

“Airi said that?”

“Well not exactly, the secretary-general's accounting division did some looking into your work hours lately and we got a complaints from the Labor Standards Inspection Division, so we've been ordered to give you a break. Don't worry you're still getting paid and we've issued you a bonus to have fun with, so feel free to splurge.”

“……OK.” Erma nodded a small nod. It was as if she didn't want to take the day off.

Returning to the dormitory, Seina immediately launched the monitor and searched the net. Seina was looking for gifts for women and had a page with accessories opened.

“I should use part of the rest of my salary to give the people who helped me so far a gift ...”

“Master, what are you doing, are you interested in buying something?” NB said from behind him.

“Oh NB, I didn't see you there!”

“Oh, these are for women...are you buying these as gifts? Would you like my advice on what to buy?”

“Well, I just got my first paycheck, so I want to give something to those who took care of me up until now.”

“So, who will you be giving these gifts to?”

“My family seems to be doing well enough that I don't think it will be necessary. Hmm, so next is Tenchi's household.”

“What are you thinking about getting them?”

“Well... let's see, there's Sasami-chan and Ayeka-san, and well my degree of familiarity with all the people in his house is totally different from my familiarity with him... so I don't know..... I don't even know most of them that well... It's a hard decision...”

“Tenchi is a childhood friend, isn't he? Why not just give him one and everyone else a big gift that everyone can use?”

“Well ... that could work, and maybe with Kai too ... ... but I want to give Tsukiko a proper gift too...”

“Don't forget Kiriko.”

“Yeah ... but I want to get her something special ..... hmm what about Uncle Dai?”

Kai's father, Dai didn't live with Tsukiko. They weren’t married or living together. Sometimes he came to see Kai, and when he came to Tsukiko's house things got rough, he had few memories of him. He was always interested in his son Kai and Kiriko, but he showed little interest in other people.

“And then there's the other people in Masaki village.”

“You can also just give them a small gift and have Tsukiko give it to them.”

“Well, I suppose you're right ..... then there's Amane, Elma, Hakuren-san, too.”

“You're forgetting someone ...”

“Oh and Ms. Seto and Minaho too ... ...”

“Wow, a gift for the Devil Princess of Jurai. Are you planning on spending that much?”

“Well, she is my benefactor. Without her I wouldn't be in space. So I should do something.”

“Hmm, and what's next?”

“Oh yeah .....”

“What about your best benefactor!”

“The best benefactor? ..... Oh no, I forgot Tennyo!”

“ACK! HOW? HOW is such an insignificant girl like her The BEST!?” Airi cried out loudly at her NB hacking terminal in the Chairman's Office. Mikami who seemed curious about the situation gently approached her from behind.

“If anything I am! And I'm beautiful and have sex appeal.”

“You?! A beautiful adult with sex appeal?!”

Airi made an irritated face close to the monitor on which Seina appeared.

“Oh, that's right! I have to give one to Principal Mikami.”

“Daaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!”

“Aww, how thoughtful.” Mikami said to Airi who fallen down on top of her desk.

“What was that about NB?”

“Oh nothing...”

“You're a weird fellow, are you broken?”

“No, I'm fine. Are you sure you're not forgetting someone... someone young and pretty?”

“I already got Mikami... who else could it be.”

“..... Think harder!” Airi, took control of NB, and shouted!

“Hmm, no that's everyone... hm... NB can you show the list to me?”

A monitor launched with the names.

“Hmm, a gift for Tenchi's house, Kai and Uncle Dai ..... Aunt Tsukiko and Kiriko, Amane, Erma, Hakuren Ms. Gyokuren, Karen, ... oh, Suiren .....!”

“God damn it! Why can you remember that thin shadowed woman and not me... ....”Airi yelled. It carried over to the NB.

“Huh? NB do you want a gift too?”

“Check the list again!”

“What? Why are you mad?”

“Err, Seto-sama, Minaho, and Tennyo. Principal Mikami.”

“Uhuhuh ... ... I hope he gets me something nice that I can show off.” Mikami smiled at Airi to boast.

“Gaaaah, no, that's not it either!”

“..... Oh! I forgot Mitoto!”

“Come on!”

“Oh and Mr. Onnainin and Minami too.

“Are you sure they want these kinds of accessories?”

“I'm not limited to just getting accessories NB!”

“Oh! Good... Then who's next!”

“You're acting really weird today, maybe I should do this on my own.”

“Oh am I? I'm fine. I don't know what you’re talking about.”

“Are you sure NB?”

“Yes of course. By the way, you forgot Airi-san! You should get her something extra nice for a woman as extra beautiful as her don't you think!” NB nudged Seina.

Seina looked at the NB in a puzzled manner. “She sure did program you weirdly...”

“I'm only stating the facts objectively.”

“I admit she's beautiful but her personality ruins it ..... I know she's Minaho's mother... but Minaho is definitely more like her father.”

“What! What do you mean?!”

“Tenchi-senpai's grandfather is very plain and calm, and a gentle person, Aunt Kiyone and Tennyo were both gentle and kind people too.....”

“GOD DAMN IT! DID HE JUST SAY both Kiyone and Tennyo are better than me?!” Airi brought her face close to the monitor and desperately defended herself.

“You bastard! Don't say bad things about people! Tennyo isn't that great! Have you ever even met Kiyone? She was awful! Way worse than Airi!”

“Wow, she sure put some dubious information in you. Makes sense...she is a very troubled person. Next time I talk to Erma I'll have her delete it. “

Giggle giggle.

Airi looked like she was about to explode. Mikami had gathered Airi's secretaries behind her to watch and they were struggling to hold in their laughter.

“Sure... but certainly you must be indebted to her a lot, you should give her presents too.”

“Huh? Why?” NB looked hard at Seina.

“If you don't, you never know what she might do.” NB said.

Seina laughed. “I suppose you’re right. She's like the witch in Sleeping Beauty. She would try and cast a plague on all of us just for not including her.”

“T-That’s a terrible thing to say about Miss Airi!”

“Hmmm, I guess you’re right.” Seina thought about what kind of response Airi would have.

“Airi is more like a witch who'd force you to invite her to your birthday party and then she would eat all the food and leaving scraps everywhere and she would drink the liquor and spike all the punch and then throw a tantrum, making everyone irritated... and then she would pass out on the floor drunk, ha ha ha...”

To Seina's way too precise analogy, the secretaries behind Airi had fallen on the floor laughing.

“Wha, what! How am I?! I can't believe he said such a thing!”

Unfortunately Airi was not confident enough to deny it.

“... I'm not even sure I want him to get me anything anymore.” Airi murmured and slumped down in her chair.

“But what should I give to Airi?”

“Give her this!” An image of a ring with glowing jewelry appeared on the screen. The price displayed there was an amount for which a large house could be built.

“It would take decades to finish paying that off, I'm going to search for myself!” Seina turned away from NB and began investigating. NB suddenly became silent and gazed at the back of Seina's head for a while.

“Sorry! I forgot something important.”

“Master.Master.Master.

Seina descended to the first floor of the dormitory by elevator and met up with Kiriko who was waiting at the entrance in front of him.

The first floor was also a small leisure facility with a restaurant, a large public bath, fitness and entertainment facilities. It was a place used by ordinary citizens as well as residents of the GP lodgings. As a result, many people should have been oohing and ahhing at the prominently featured Kiriko but despite there being a lot of people they diverted their eyes from Kiriko and remained quiet.

“Oh, hi there! Oh is that you Seina!” Airi said after waltzing in and shaking hands with a coworker who was resting nearby.

“Thank you for waiting for me.”

“Well then, let's go.” Airi grabbed Seina and made a dash to the dining room.

“A, Airi! Airi, you don't have to hurry!”

“I'm hungry!” Airi sat Seina down and began to hand out giant Viking style dishes. There were dozens of them.

*** * * Editors’ note: Viking is the Japanese word for buffet. * * ***

“Wow!” Seina gazed at the situation quietly, the dishes were ordered beautifully and arranged so that the tastes didn't mix poorly.

“Just what I would expect from the owner of Nashisu,” Kiriko said.

Airi prepared dishes and drinks in a short amount of time and walked toward the terrace.

“In here! Hurry up!” Airi rushed to Seina and started putting dishes out.

The terrace was still sparse and was quite empty.

As soon as Airi sat down, it was time to eat.

“Hmm ... ... This is so good”

“So, Seina, what are you planning to buy with your first month's salary?” Airi asked.

“Ehh!!”

“Well, uhm, I set aside money for my living expenses and the rest is just savings.”

“Yeah, yeah, seriously though. Payday! Payday! Payday! You have to treat yourself right, what are you getting?”

“My reward for myself is getting a salary, and the luxury is my life since I came to the academy.”

“Good Seina-chan. You should save your money.”

“Huh! Good? A man mustn't worry about wasting money, the more you use the money, the more it will come in!”

“Seina, don't listen to the lies coming from that demon's mouth.”

“Who are you calling a demon, little girl!?”

“Saving money is just common sense. Only a demon would say otherwise!” Kiriko said, most people there nodded. But Gyokuren had closed her eyes and was drinking tea. Airi noticed.

“Gyokuren-chan, you're an adult like me... Gyokuren-chan, you know.” Airi said.

“I do not know if Airi's words are correct, but ....”

“Yes..... Yes...?”

“If Seina is financially ruined, I will provide for him and feed him.”

“Eh” Seina turned red and looked at Gyokuren who was serious.

“Damn...”

“Wow, she just used me to flirt with you! Seina, be careful! That girl is the real devil!” Airi shoved dessert in her face and washed it down with tea. Airi's eyes had tears spreading down them, probably because she was so frustrated that the conversation hadn't gone her way.

“God damn it!” Airi ate the rest of the deserts and grabbed some plates and went home. Where she began to eat those dishes with great momentum.

“Well then, hey Seina, did you hear about Seiryo?” Amane said with a loud voice to break the awkwardness of what just happened.

“.... No”

“I totally forgot about him.” Kiriko said.

“He's going to be a prisoner forever because of how high the pirates set his ransom!”

“Aren't the Tennan's rich?”

“His father is notoriously cheap! They cut him off the second he tried to haggle down the ransom. Ahahahaha!”

“I hope he gets back soon.”

“Don't waste your time worrying about him! I'm sure he will make a fine Space Pirate. I look forward to arresting him with the Kamidake.”

“No way that would ever happen...” Kiriko laughed...

Erma just stared at Seina with a sad expression…

Seiryo was in the prison of the Da Ruma Guild's headquarters the Big Da Ruma. In the block under the jurisdiction of Tarrant Shank, the place where the hostages that he kidnapped were held.

“I can't believe I'm being held in such a dump.” Seiryo shouldn't have known where he was. But because of his nano machines, which were able to scan the area, he knew exactly where he was. They hadn't deactivated his nano machines because they were the latest tech and didn't have scanners to detect them. It would have been easy for him to escape. But Seiryo was stupid.

“... When will I be released?” But he didn't think to escape he just thought of how bored he was.

“I bet the ransom for me is enormous, ha ha ha. Hey, where did she go?!” Seiryo noticed that the woman in the solitary cell across from him was suddenly gone. “How? Was she safely released?”

Most of the cells that surrounded Seiryo were filled with hostages for ransom purposes. And they were released once negotiations were over. There were a few dozen people.

“What? ……What!?”

At that time, one of his nano-probes found a cleverly hidden block in that cell. And in the room behind the block, it discovered many male and female carcasses which had been brutally maimed.

“What is that all about!?” Seiryo frowned. He nearly puked.

“What, is this!?” As his nano-probe ran away from that room, it moved through the block and found a lavishly decorated room, obviously different from the other rooms, with a young man and his adjutant.

“That's Tarrant Shank!” Tarrant had finished taking a shower, and was lying on the sofa with his waist wrapped with a bath towel. Casts and seals for body regeneration were affixed all over his body.

“Mr. Tarrant, the adjustment of the replacement Daedalus Core to the new hull has been completed.”

“Good... what's the status of getting rid of that phantom* from our computer systems?”

* * * **Translators’ note: *By phantom he means Miki * * ***

“Thanks to Huo Balta's team, we've successfully cleared it out from 60% of our systems.”

“Uhuhuhu good, as soon as the phantom extermination has been completed, let me know.”

“Yes sir!”

“How about Erma?”

“She hasn't made her move yet. The Kamidake is stuck at the Academy for now, she will probably do it tomorrow ...”

“You look good.”

“Hmm?” It was Komachi's voice that pulled Seiryo's consciousness back. “What are you doing? I feel sick, don't talk to me.”

“Tell that to your father.”

“I can't believe he's left me to rot here.”

Komachi put up a secret wall. This was a block under the jurisdiction of Tarrant, but Seiryo hacked it and took it under control. They had it installed for having conversations with prisoners they didn't want overheard by others.

“Tarrant is in a room behind one of the cells. He uses it to drag people in and, ugh it's disgusting! I don't want to remember.”

“A camouflaged room ... Wait a moment! Where are you?”

“I have no idea!”

“Are you with the rest of Tarrant's hostages?”

“I think so. I was talking to one of them when they disappeared. That's how I found it. Hahahaha.”

(Why didn't he find it with his nano-machines? They should have found that room when they did their survey. But he didn't even notice. Why is he bragging about being an idiot?) Komachi thought.

“Seiryo, do you know where this place is?”

“I am not interested in that.”

“What?”

“I don't care. It doesn't matter. I'll be scolded if I interfere with my father's negotiations.”

“There’s no reason to for them to let him haggle down the ransom for you.”

“Ha ha ha! Buy goods as cheap as possible that is the golden rule of business.”

So he doesn't realize he is on the big Da Ruma. But his story gives me an idea. Komachi ran to the bridge.

“Did you find it?” Komachi was asked as she rushed onto the bridge.

“Yes, there is a camouflaged room after all. It was well hidden.”

“Is that so? Then what he said was true.” Komachi felt a complicated feeling about that. (What he said was true. Then there is no room for doubt about his abilities, but he doesn't know he’s on the big Da Ruma. No, he just wasn't interested in knowing, or in finding that hidden place initially. But he found it once he did. I see why he got as far as he did in the GP now.) Then Komachi thought about Seiryo's past behavior and his father who was trying to haggle his son's ransom.

“Maybe he's just stupid?” she said out loud near an operator.

“Komachi-sama, the hostage that was gone a while ago is back.”

“What?!” Komachi approached the surveillance monitor.

“I guess their ransom must have been paid.”

“In that case they'll be returned to their family soon.”

“Is that so? Hmmm, do you know where the hostages are?”

“Everyone is in this block.”

“Everyone? What a coincidence. No, it can't be that!”

“What? Did you realize something?”

Instead of answering the operator, Komachi thought. (He must have that room so he can torture and kill hostages and bring them back over and over again while they wait on the ransom, anything done to someone from the academy can be excused. But, he built an unauthorized facility in the Big Da Ruma.)

Even if they didn't manage to get Ryoko's crew's family members away, it was something that could deprive Tarrant of power and launch an investigation against him. But he's using this to make sure Yamada is assassinated. They're not going to do anything.

She knew the guild would let Tarrant slide on this unless he was taking direct actions against the guild.

“Let's keep on looking at things for a while, please continue to investigate”

“Roger that.”

Chapter Five: Joy and Sorrow

After dinner, Seina quickly went back to his room. He had plenty of reasons to be tired, and he had to go shopping the next day. Airi was planning to have a banquet all night in Seina's room, but fortunately, this was a GP dormitory, so drinking in rooms with underage boys was prohibited. Even Airi, the president of the academy, couldn't enter Seina's room without special permission.

Airi's dissatisfaction was eventually directed towards the others, and everyone but Seina was forced to participate in Airi's banquet. The banquet took place in Kiriko's room, and when Seina got up to go to the bathroom at midnight, the light from Kiriko's room was still on.

*** * * Translators' note: I guess he can see her place from his? This setting has never been described in proper detail. * * ***

The next morning, Seina got up early so he wouldn't cross paths with Kiriko and went downstairs, he was going to have breakfast in the cafeteria. He was headed there when .....

"Where are you going?"

"Ahk!?"

Suddenly a voice from his side called to him. He froze up. Not only Amane and Kiriko but also Airi and Hakuren were on the sofa next to Seina.

"You're still up?"

"None of us slept."

"Seina, why do you have a lunch box with you? Where are you going?"

"Uhm ... ... I got a call from Kenneth."

"Is it because you just got paid Seina?" Kiriko said with a strange tension in her voice.

"Uhm, yeah! That's it."

"Blow them off! Wouldn't you rather go out with me somewhere?"

"The only place you should go is bed Amane! He should go with me and..."

“Sorry I made a promise ... well then I'll just excuse myself!” Seina dashed to the exit between the gap where Amane and Kiriko were fighting. The others didn't give chase.

“Hehe, he seems to blown both of you off.” Gyokuren smiled.

“Where is he going?!”

“He's with NB, let's use it to watch him!”

“Kiriko! This is no time to be watching him from behind a screen! Let's follow him!”

“But he's already gone.”

“That won't stop me! I'm a first class detective you know!”

“Second class, and you got demoted.”

“Shut up!! As if I care! Look, we’ve got to go quickly or I'll lose sight of him!” Amane ran away from Kiriko, Kiriko pursued.

Hakuren looked at Airi with a surprised face.

“Oh Airi-san aren't you going to follow them?”

“Fuhh, I trust in Seina... unlike those girls, I'm an adult.”

“Why are you hacking into NB's camera while saying that?” Karen looked at the monitor with Seina on it over Airi's shoulder.

“I want to watch Amane and Kiriko-chan make fools of themselves. Let's make breakfast and then watch them.” She turned off the monitor and got up but looked around the area.

“Oh! Where's Erma?”

“She must have snuck out.”

“Oh well, sucks for her.” Airi headed for the dining hall.

As Airi and Hakuren headed for the dining hall, Erma came down from the elevator. She silently and quickly walked towards the exit.

Near the dormitory where Seina was staying, was the biggest commercial entertainment district within a thousand kilometers. It was about a ten minute trip by train. It was the size of a small city.

Seina downloaded a special brochure last night and marked the places he wanted to go, but finding them was harder than he expected. “Hmmm this seems to be the place that NB placed that order,” he said, double checking his location. He went around the corner past a hedge to his destination and stopped.

“Seriously?” It was a lingerie shop. He hadn't been able to tell that from the name of the store. “What did he buy from such a place?” He went in.

“Welcome.”

Seina headed for the counter quickly where a young lady clerk greeted him gently.

“Uhm, I was told I had an item for pick up here ... ...”

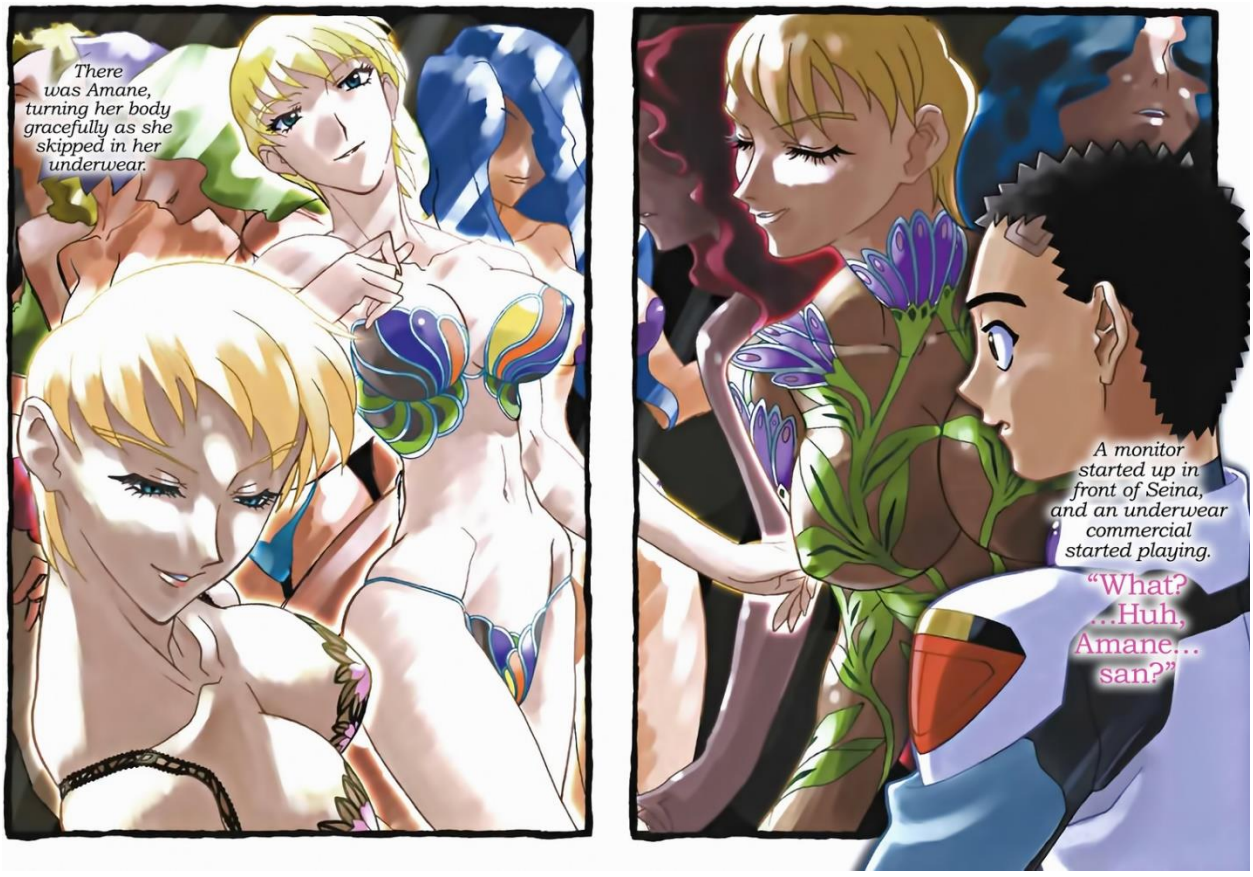
“Yes, please give me your ID so we can confirm it.”

Seina launched his ID on the counter plate. The received data turned blue.

“Yes, for Mr. NB... please wait here.”

A plate with a discoid shape that was in front of the counter floated in front of Seina with its inverted face up. Seina sat down at an angle so his face could not be seen by the customers who were there picking out items. Advertisements started to play.

“What is ...? ... Is that Amane ……?”


There was Amane, turning her body gracefully as she skipped in her underwear.
A monitor started up in front of Seina, and an underwear commercial started playing.
“What? ...Huh, Amane... san?”

There was Amane on the screen, lightly swaying and dancing. She was a little bit younger and thinner than she was now but it was her. The models who took turns with her were also beautiful women, but Amane had a commanding presence over them.

“Wow!” He forgot the embarrassment of being in shop and looked at the screen mesmerized.

Kiriko was watching Seina sitting at the counter from the fitting rooms at the back of the store. Kiriko's face was obscured with optically camouflaged sunglasses that made her have a different persons face.

“So, what do you think?” Kiriko spoke to Amane beside her.

“It feels nice.” Amane said while looking at the pair of underwear she was trying on.

“I'm not talking about the underwear!” Kiriko gave Amane the sunglasses and pulled Amane's ears violently to turn her towards Seina.

“Ouch!”

“Pay attention.”

“Oh come on you're having fun too...You don't look so bad yourself.”

Kiriko concealed some bright red undergarments she was trying on with both hands to shield Amane's line of sight.

“Shit, whatever you wear is gonna look good. Must be hard to choose.”

“Amane!” Kiriko tried to drag her back to watch Seina but her grasp missed and Amane headed to the fitting room again. Kiriko stopped paying attention to her and focused on Seina again.

15 minutes later, the store clerk returned to Seina.

“Sorry to keep you waiting.”

However, he didn't notice her voice. Seina was still looking at the ad. The clerk watched Seina with a smile.

“Did you like it?” The clerk asked after it was over.

“Oh ... oh, sorry, I got distracted.”

“Here you go! Please come with me.” Seina stood up as soon the clerk said that and handed him the order and passed through a door to a place surrounded by a lattice windowed partition.

“You seem to like the video, Seina Yamada.”

“An acquaintance of mine was in it. I was a little surprised.”

“That video was originally for an over-the-counter promotion, it's a special extended version that was not broadcast on TV. It isn't meant for distribution but I can give it to you if you like since you're a friend of Amane's. Here's the data of all the promotions and commercials data that we have, please take them.”

“……Oh, thank you!”

“Please confirm the items in your order for me.”

The clerk took out underwear one by one from the box and started showing them to Seina.

“No way! No way! Seina would never come to such a shop by himself.”

“Well he's a man, can you blame him?” Amane came up beside Kiriko wearing sky blue underwear.

“Being interested in ladies in their panties and coming to buy them are two different things!”

“Maybe he just wants some to play with.”

“Don't say such stupid things!”

“He could have just asked Gyokuren, I'm sure she would have taken hers off right on the spot if he did, ha ha ha.”

Kiriko could see that in her head and it angered her.

“Gaaaaaaaaah!” Kiriko turned red. But she soon shook that delusion out of her head.

“..... It may be a present for someone ...!”

“Underwear?”

“Oh!”

“Whatever it's for, I'm having trouble seeing what he's doing from here.” Amane and Kiriko tried to move over there but a woman pushed the two back into the fitting rooms.

“Amane, Kiriko-sama! Please do not go out of the changing room dressed such a matter.”

“Oh, oops, sorry Nanami.”

Coincidentally, Amane and Kiriko were both acquainted with Nanami, the owner of this shop.

Amane knew her from her days as a model, Kiriko from Minaho.

“We don't allow indecent exposure in our store.”

“Ha ha ha ... Sorry my bad ... By the way Nanami ..... What did Seina buy?

“We don't deal with items other than what you see here.”

“Is that what Seina's buying, isn’t it someone else’s order?”

“I can't say for privacy reasons.”

“Ms. Nanami, does Seina-chan ...come here often?”

“I can't say for privacy reasons,” Nanami responded clerically.

“Seina is a minor we're his guardians ...”

“There is no age restriction to buy underwear.”

“But it's for women!”

“Oh no, Ms. Kiriko, there are quite a few men who like to wear it.” Nanami said.

Kiriko and Amane were frozen.

“Oh!!” They wondered if that was why he bought it.

“... .... Check, check ...” The clerk said she showed Seina each pair... she was enjoying Seina’s reaction who was bright red. When the last item was confirmed, Seina felt quite mentally fatigued. He wiped the sweat off of his head and sighed.

The clerk transferred the item to the place designated by NB.

“We need your biometric authentication, please put your palm here.”

The clerk pointed to the monitor on the table. When Seina put his hands there, the monitor disappeared.

“The procedure has been completed. Thank you ♡ Mr. Yamada please contact us anytime you want more gifts.” The clerk smiled and handed a business card to Seina. Seina ran out as soon as he got it.

“Hey! Hey! Kiriko! Seina just left!”

“No!” Nanami caught the hands of the two as they tried to run after him.

“Both of you, please change your clothes before you leave! Did you like the items you tried on?”

“Ah!” Kiriko and Amane remembered that they were in their underwear and turned red and jumped back into the fitting room. Within ten seconds the two were dressed and came out.

“Nanami, we will take those outfits! Please send us the bill.”

“Thank you! A pleasure as always. Please be careful.”

The two took off and Nanami picked up the pairs they left to send to them.

“Oh, both of them are slightly larger now ... I have to update their profiles.”

“Ms. Manager!” The clerk who was with Seina called out, she came to see her.

“How did things go with Mr. Yamada?”

“Good. He was very embarrassed and turned bright red.”

“I hate to give our store a bad reputation, but, well, get the footage of it and send it on over to Seto for me please.”

“Right away!”

“Oh... and send a copy to Ringo,” Nanami laughed mischievously.

Next, Seina reached a baby-shaped building.

“What is this? A toy store?” Seina was relieved. He entered the shop.

“Hey! He went into that shop!” Amane said to Kiriko as if surprised.

“A toy shop? Why are you so surprised?”

“Look up...”

Kiriko looked up....above the baby were spread legs in fishnets.

Clearly it was a sex toy shop.

“Aaaaaaaaaah! Is that ...”

“Yes, it’s a toy shop.... an adult toy shop.”

“Seiiiiinaaa! What is he doing shopping for such things!?”

“Calm down. We need to approach him about this in a calm manner.”

“Fine.” Kiriko took a deep breath to calm herself.

“But, what if Seina is buying something to uhm.... eliminate his desires in there...?”

“... ... Do you think that's what it is?”

“Look, there are lots of women around Seina ... and he's a growing boy....”

Seina came out of the store again. As he walked away the lips part of the sign for the store fell off as Kiriko and Amane left to follow him. Luckily it got caught in the tree.

Amane and Kiriko kept talking without noticing.

“Why would he be going to such places?!”

“Maybe someone put him up to it...”

“But who?”

“I'd bet its Airi-sama ...”

“I bet its Gyokuren ... .”

“Either way we need to take this cautiously and ask him without jumping to conclusions.” They hurried after Seina.

“What is wrong with NB, why did he do this? Maybe it's that character software Amane installed. I don't know why he would think that Kiriko would want such things...”

Seina was blocked from his next destination.

“You probably don't mean to enter here kid...” A young policeman stopped Seina with a polite but intimidating voice.

Seina hastily confirmed his position on the map. He wasn't in the wrong place. “No this is right.”

“You're a little too young to have a hobby like this. Oh!” The policeman noticed Seina's rank from his uniform. “I didn't realize you were a Captain! Go on ahead.” The policemen saluted and opened the road.

“Uhm, thank you.” Seina entered the alley and went up the stairs to a building. Seina stood in front of the door and confirmed again that it was the destination. At the door there was no nameplate so he didn't know what it was. He rang. The door opened and a strange man appeared.

“Our shop is members only. Do you have a referral?”

“NB.”

“Oh, Mr. NB. I have been waiting, come in!”

He was ushered in, the armored shutter in front of him opened and a door closed behind him with a heavy sound. But there was a dead end in front of him Seina suddenly felt a light shock. (Oh, it's a transfer!) He felt that because it was a cheap transfer machine. He had experienced it several times in many commercial places.

Seina arrived in what looked like a cheap hotel waiting room.

“Wait here.”

On the sofa that the man pointed him to was a woman in evening wear, she had tiger like make up on and she was pretty.

“Hey, is he a customer?”

“That's right.” Two women came out wearing corsets.

“Well, then, come with us pretty boy.” The two of them dragged him to a transfer gate.

“.... d...dd...dd...” Kiriko kept staring at the door that Seina entered. Amane had no idea why she looked at it puzzled. But Kiriko had heard from others what this place was.

“Dream ... This is a dream ..... This isn't happening... just a dream.”

“We can make it a dream if you like...”A female voice called out.

“Is that!?” Amane looked and saw three women smiling with whips. The three people stood to block their way, and a small vibration sound was heard from the whips they carried. The woman who had been sitting next to Seina with tiger like makeup came out one step ahead.

“Oh, is that you Amane?”

“Yumino!”

“Wow! Long time no see Amane.” The woman called Yumino jump over to Amane and hugged her.

“Wait is that Amane Kaunaq, do you know her Yumi-chan?” The other two powered down their whips.

“I'm happy, you finally came to visit. I've been waiting for you forever, but you never came!”

“I didn't come to play!”

“Hmm~ ~! Too bad... Because you're not going to escape.”

*** * * Translators’’ note: This pic is of who they put in as Yumino in the anime, very different from her description. * * ***

Yumino not only clung to Amane, but also to Kiriko's hands firmly. The other two women quickly surrounded them.

“Relax, you might look good in leather. It might suit you, demon instructor.” They began to drag them off to the transfer gate.

“Sorry to have kept you waiting, this is the data NB sensei requested.” The intense man pointed to a 2 centimeter thick black cube in the palm of his hand.

“Put your hand on the cube.” Seina put his palm on the cube. The cube snapped onto Seina's palm.

“What!?”

“Oh, is the first time you've done this? It's okay, it's not fused to your body, it's sticking to the surface and spreading out till it's thinner than a nano-meter, no need to panic.”

“Uhm ... .” He looked at and touched his palm but saw no traces of it.

“Later if you touch the key program to unlock it, it will be rebuilt.”

“Okay ... ... but this data is it uhm ... .” Seina was concerned about the legality of the contents of the data.

“Oh, you do not need to worry - its personal hobby data, nothing illegal.” The intense man said with a laugh.

”So... Do you want to play while you’re here?” The woman with the man put her hand on Seina as she asked him.

“Hey cool it... this is not that kind of customer, he isn't age fixed, he’s a genuine minor.” The intense man pulled the woman's hand off as one would swat away a kitten’s paw.

“Go out through the gate at the end, please be careful not to get lost as the transfer destination will be different from where you entered.”

“Bye.... come and see me as an adult.”

“Uhm.... thanks... I guess ... .” Seina went into the gate that the man pointed at.

“Hmm... its' a shame I could have shown him what a real girl was like!” The woman said.

“Actually, I hear he lives with some of the most beautiful woman there are, you are probably a 5 to him...”

“That's an awful thing to say... You're my manager!”

“Ha ha ha ha, but it's true. ... Hey were did Yumino go?” The man launched a monitor.

“What the?”

In front of the monitor, the women who had dragged off Kiriko and Amane were tied up with their own whips.

“Whew... I'm finally done...” Seina saw everything was checked off on the list. He sat down on a bench.

“... What the heck is wrong with NB? ... I'm going to have Erma do a serious scan on that thing.”

“Oh, what’s wrong with it?”

“Huh?” Seina heard a voice and looked up to find Erma looking at him.

“Wow that was close.” Kiriko and Amane sat on the bench where Seina was sitting previously.

“I didn't know you knew such awesome techniques.”

“It's just basic GP capture and evasion techniques. How do you know that girl anyways?”

“She used to model with me. Oh, look over there.” Amane pointed off in the distance. Kiriko looked and saw Seina with Erma walking side by side.

“No, no way! Seina bought all that to go on a date with Erma?”

“Well, I don't think that's it. Philosophers have a reputation for this sort of thing. And Erma is Airi's secretary.”

“So maybe it's Airi... Oh, is that why Airi suddenly came over last night ...?”

“Less talk more following... we're gonna lose them.”

“Oh, so you're looking for gifts?”

“I never thought I'd run into you here Erma.”

“Don't worry I'll keep it a secret. Why don't I help you out?”

“Ha ha ha ... ... well... no pressure or anything ... .” Behind them Amane and Kiriko followed.

“Hey Seina, I know a great place. A little a hole in the wall that Airi showed me once. Let’s go.”

“Oh... Well, I already checked everyplace online so ...”

“Oh no, it's not listed online.”

“Oh.... Well I guess it can't hurt to check....”

“Alright then... let's go, the transfer pad is right over there.” Erma pulled Seina into a transfer pad on the side of the street.

“Where did they go!?”

“Erma must have noticed us. She won't be able to escape a first class detective like me!”

“Former and second class!”

“Who cares?! Let's go! We have to find them!”

“Wait a minute!” Kiriko accessed the transfer gate management system and tried to find out where they had gone but it wasn't clear.

“Seina, it's over here.” She pointed to a large bazaar in a park across from the highway in front of them. “Let's go.” Erma took him by the hand and led him.

“There are so many bargains here. It's mostly used and junk items, but there are some retired craftsmen and technicians who sell their handmade goods to the general public. Their work is top notch.”

“Oh, is it really that good?”

“It's good enough that professional buyers to come here for their purchases, so I'm sure you will find something good.”

“But there are so many shops, I feel like I'll get lost.”

“Well, at least we have time.” They came to a stall with stuffed toys.

“Hmm, a stuffed doll. This would be perfect for Mitoto. But, maybe not for Seto.”

The stuffed animals there were, of course, not imitations of the earth's animals. There were some that he had seen in Seto's ship and some he had seen from images, but he had no idea what most of them were.

“What's wrong?” Erma noticed Seina was distracted. He noticed the dolls had no seams and the material it was made of quickly regained its shape when squished and it also felt a little warm.

“Oh nothing... This just some amazing technology...”

“Have you found one you like?”

“It is a bit difficult to choose...”

“Then let's move on. We can always come back. No need to decide now.” Erma smiled.

They went looking for another good shop.

“Oh!” Seina stopped at a certain tent shop. Things from the earth were lined up there.

“Sup bro, is there anything here you like?”

A girl with a big scarf wrapped around her head and big sunglasses and blue jean overalls over an olive shirt called to him.

*** * * Translators' note: ***** It's Washu ***** * * ***

"Oh, this looks interesting." Erma said as she examined something. "Hey Seina, wouldn't this be great for tea or alcohol? It's a very good shape to put in a wine cooler and cool it."

"What?! ... That!" Said Seina unconsciously. He was very familiar with the item she had.

Erma smiled as she showed it off. As a hospital regular... it gave him a sense of nostalgia.

*** * * Translators' note: It's a hospital urinal * * ***

"Uhm... Erma ... ... that's ..."

"Ba ha ha ha ha ha ha! Yes, that is certainly a nice use for it." The girl laughed hard.

"Is that so? Is it a rare Item? Should I buy it?" Erma said smiling. Seina held back the urge to say what it was.

"No, Erma-san .... It's very common, Kiriko and I are Earthlings, and Amane and Airi are also familiar with its usage on the earth and that is a bit off ..."

"Oh, is that so, should I put it back ...?"

"Hey Bro, quit getting in the way of my business."

"Then don't sell stuff like this! By the way, that's a brand new one, right?" Seina cried in a loud voice.

"Yeah... Something like that..."

"You're not just going to let someone use that for tea are you?"

"..... Shit... maybe..." The girl thought about it for a while. "Why did you have to ruin my fun so soon Seina?"

“What do you mean ..... why do you know my name?”

“She called you that a while ago, and we're dealing with things from the Earth, and there's no one who doesn't know your name Seina.”

“Oh, I see.”

“Fuhuh, but you could use it for that... you never know, it might become its main use here.” She said.

“Please don't do that.” Seina appealed to the girl.

“Eh?”

“I don't intend to disturb your business, but please don't sell those to be used for drinks ...”

“Fine but ... But it's not my job to see how they use these items once they buy them! Tell you what... I'll give you something if you just go away...”

“So you're doing this intentionally?” Seina thought that further persuasion seemed pointless. He looked inside the store and found a bell attacked to a small ribbon.

He pointed at it. “I'll take that.”

“Hmm... ok then... pleasure doing business with you bro.” The girl smiled.

*** * * Translators’ note: Not to spoil anything but that's clearly the bell Fuku gets.... and it's also... probably Chibi the cat's bell from episode 1 of the OVA... #deepestloretheories Where else would Washu get one... She almost never leaves the house. * * ***

“Oh look, it's Seina and Erma too” Airi came up to them holding a big backpack.

“Airi!”

“What kind of hello is that?”

“Uh, I uh, just didn't expect to see you at such a place. Although Erma did tell me you told her about this place.”

“Airi, are you here shopping?” Erma asked.

“I'm doing some shopping for the restaurant.” From Airi's backpack, an animal like a bird with a long neck looked out and stared at Seina. From the backpack a number of muffled small barks echoed.

(Eh.... maybe she's adopting some pets.... I'm sure those aren't for the shop ... ...) Seina quickly shook his head to stop thinking about it.

“Never mind me... you two seem to be getting along well ...”

“Oh, no, it's not like that ... ... She's helping me pick out presents for my friends.”

“Huh, gifts? Really Erma? Wow! Well, this is the best place for that.”

Suddenly Airi started a brochure monitor, Airi pointed to a necklace. “Get me this.”

“... uhm... What?”

“Well then I'll be waiting for you to bring it by tonight.” Airi waived and ran off.

“What was that about...?”

“That's just how Airi is... But she has a good point. Women love jewelry.”

“Oh! Right!” Seina looked at the pamphlet that Airi left with him. However, the necklace pointed to by Airi was unbelievably expensive. (No way am I buying that) ... ... Seina looked around for a store.

“Oh!” Seina, who noticed something, took Erma's hand and ran for the store.

“Oh!!” Erma turned red as she noticed him holding her hand. “Hey, Seina slow down!”

They went into the stylish jewelry shop, which was built by refurbishing a large two - story bus.

“Wow, this is cute ...” Erma saw a necklace she liked.

“It's nice.

“I rarely buy accessories, but if that were for me ... I know I would... Oh oops, I'm here to help you shop... I got carried away looking for me.”

“No, your input has been extremely helpful.” Seina specifically began thinking about to whom he would gift to the various reasonably priced jewelry pieces in the showcase.

— Erma.

“Huh!” Suddenly, Elma who had been smiling changed her expression to an odd one. A man's voice came to her. They were using a biometric communication that was hard to intercept, but only worked over short distances. Erma tried to look around for them and spotted them.

– – – Why are you following me?

—— We're here to help you escape.

– – – Oh really are you sure you’re not here to make sure I don't get away either?

—— Don't flatter yourself.

– – – I don't need your help.

—— You better hope not. A lot of people are counting on you.

They broke off communication and disappeared.

“.....”

“Erma, Erma ... .”

“……Huh?” Erma snapped back to reality and noticed Seina looking at her anxiously. “I haven't eaten since last night ... ... Can we take a break?”

“Oh ... Ok, I was just busy thinking about what to buy.”

“Why don't you think about it while we take a break.... uhm... I don't have any idea what to buy myself.... but I've got some Ideas ... but I'm way too hungry.”

“Well ... ... then shall we go?”

Erma diverted her eyes from Seina and walked out of the store.

“No sign of Erma here either!”

Amane and Kiriko were pursuing Seina and Erma, by trying various transfer gates destinations and looking for clues. Fortunately white Waus were rare, so it was relatively easy to find witnesses.

“... ... which way did they go?”

“If Seina had taken NB, it would have been easier to find him but ...”

“Wait... he didn't? Where did NB go? Maybe we should try to access it?”

“No time. We have to find him.” Amane thought about it a bit and chose the most likely destination and soon they transferred again.

× × ×

Seina and Erma bought some small snacks from the bazaar, and went to a nearby park with big trees. It was a quiet place where you couldn't hear the sound of cars running on the highway or the noise of people nearby.

They sat on the bench, Erma was watching the scenery with some bottled tea in her hands.

About 30 minutes later, Seina finished eating, he drank his drink and took a big breath before quickly looking at Erma's appearance. “Are you okay?”

“... .... Yes, I'm fine.” Something seemed off about Erma as she smiled.

“Hey, Seina, please go shopping without me, okay?”

“But what about you?”

“I'm tired. I need to rest a bit. Airi kept us all last night so let me rest here. Hurry, if you don't, then the things you want might be sold out.”

“Oh, that's right ..... OK. I'll see you in a while.”

“……See you soon.” Seina threw away his trash and ran to the nearby transfer gate.

Erma took out a small handgun from her coat pocket and stared at it sadly.

× × ×

“Okay, thank you.” Amane and Kiriko finally reached the gate where Seina and Erma came out last. Someone had spotted him and Erma in a nearby park.

“Let's go!”

× × ×

When Seina came back, there was quite a line in that accessory shop. However, it seemed that the customer base had changed over to a less rich crowd than before.

(I wonder if they still have them.)

“Excuse me, if you want to get in that store, the end of the line is over there.” A man who seemed to be in charge of queuing customers said to Seina with a polite tone.

“It seems that the situation here is quite different from when I came a while ago ...”

“Because the owner of this store is here making an appearance.”

Seina looked past the man. There was an elderly person who was talking with customers and a woman who was her secretary. Coincidentally, the secretary looked at Seina and smiled.

“!” Surprised, Seina bowed to her reflexively, and turned to leave.

“Please wait, Mr. Seina Yamada.”

The secretary who was in the store rushed towards him. “You are Seina Yamada right?”

“Yes, how do you do?”

“Did you by chance want something from here?”

“Yes, that's right ... but ...”

“I saw you looking at it a while ago..... I saved it for you.”

“Well ... but ...”

The woman invited Seina inside the store, everyone lined up outside gazed at him, surprised.

“Oh, are you a customer?”

The old owner smiled towards Koyuki, the secretary, and Seina. Seina bowed.

“Yes, thank you for letting me in.”

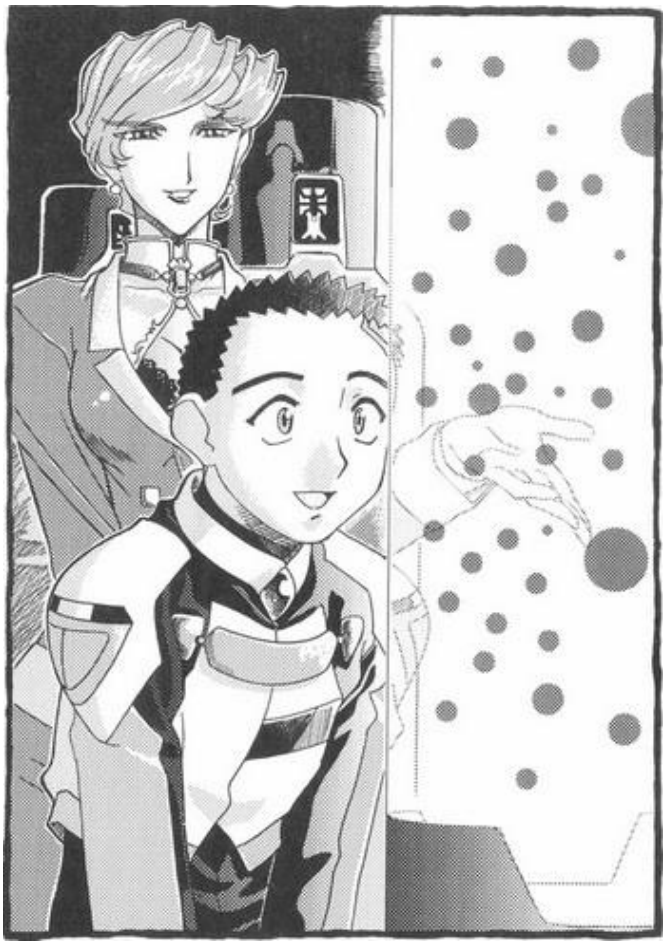
The secretary bowed to the old owner and her guests, and took Seina to the back of the shop.

× × ×

“Here you go.”

The back of the store seemed to be a compressed space larger on the inside, and there was a space like a small exhibition room that seemed to be too big to fit in the large two-storied bus. There were lots of accessories and glittery decorations in the glass pillar case. It was nothing but fine items, much more elaborately made and expensive than those NB and Airi asked for.

“If you would like them, we will sell them to you at an amount that isn't much more than the ones you were looking at earlier.” The woman said with a smile. Seina's face was filled with anxiety.



“No, no I couldn't!” Nothing was free and it was unnatural for him to get things so cheap.

“I am sorry, I forgot to introduce myself. I am Koyuki Tatsuki. I'm a member of the Tatsuki Royal Family of Jurai.”

“Oh you are...? Whew...”

“The items lined up here and the items in the store are products that the craftsman wanted to make, but they are the prototypes the craftsman made before the final release. The materials are actually cheap and the jewelry is all synthetic.” Koyuki noticed Seina's anxiety and explained the reason for the cheapness.

“But they’re very beautiful, and the workmanship is superb. And they're very rare ...”

“Please sit down; I want to show you something.” Koyuki pointed to a high chair like one used in a bar. When Seina sat on the chair, a large glass display case appeared from the ceiling.

“..... Wow, it's beautiful.” Pearls ranging from one centimeter to ten centimeters floated in the pillar. It was like a wide variety of marbles.

“These are made of Amber found only on Jurai.”

“Amber?”

“The resin of the trees there that solidified in the ground and became fossils. When Amber is made into jewelry, it is polished like other precious stones, but these came naturally in this shape...”

“I don't know much about Amber at all, so I'm not quite sure, but isn't that rare?”

“Yes, although it has different shades of colors, most Amber here is a sort of caramel-color, but as you can see here we have a variety of colors and some are unique to Jurai. In particular the ones that are naturally spherical. Often times they were given to royalty as gifts.”

“Really? ..... They must be very expensive ...”

“Don't think of the price. It's pointless. These are not normally for sale. They're all a part of my private collection, so all I will charge is the basic jewelry setting fee's and the cost of the case.”

“Is that really okay? They’re so valuable.” Seina was naturally uneasy.

“It may be bad business but there are enough for me to spare a few to give my acquaintances.”

“Even if I am an acquaintance, today is only our first meeting, isn't it a bit soon?”

“I'm sorry, Minaho and Ringo often talk about you ... and I bet your gifts are probably gifts for them, I think they would enjoy it.”

“Oh!” Seina noticed something. “Are the customers who are waiting outside ... ...?”

“Yes, people who want amber pearls of their own. Whenever the owner comes out, they swarm her to get to know her.” In other words, those who didn't know that the actual owner was Koyuki rushed to the old lady.

“So am I right? Are you giving gifts to those who took care of you with your first paycheck?”

“Why would you assume that?”

“There are many such customers at this time of the year, half of the customers you saw this morning were doing that, and they're half of our business. It’s how we manage to stay so popular in such an unadvertised place. It's all word of mouth.”

“Oh I see.”

“So I definitely would like to let you purchase these Seina.”

“Okay ..... uhm, but such a valuable item, is it okay for them to wear it after I give them it?” Seina worried that if they wore it they would be mugged for showing off as being rich and he knew that if his luck was involved the probability would go up.

“Plenty of people wear fakes... I think they will be okay.”

“Really?”

“An ordinary person can't tell from a glance the difference but of course, the real thing has a nano-sized serial number and many small fine features that are kept in a secret ledger but it’s not available to the public.”

“Oh, so then it's fine... alright.”

“Seina, if you don't mind, please tell me who you’re giving gifts to, so I can help you decide to fit their tastes and pick a good color for them.” Koyuki then started to access her customer list for all her stores.

× × ×

“They must have stopped around here.”

“Hey beautiful lady, where ya goin’. Buy something!” Kiriko went wide eyed when she saw who was calling her.

“Wa, wa wa Washu ...” Kiriko blurted out after seeing but Washu put her index finger on her lips and covered Kiriko's mouth.

“Are you lookin’ for Seina?”

“Did you see him?” Kiriko asked in a loud voice.

“He was with a white Wau girl, about an hour ago, but I saw him here alone a while ago so he must still be here.”

“Okay, thank you.”

“Oh, Kiriko.” Amane caught Kiriko as she tried to run off. “Wouldn't this be great to have?” Amane had the bottle that Erma had wanted before.

“Uhmm Amane...” Just as Seina, Kiriko also knew what it was.

“It would be great for putting drinks in!”

“Don't say such a stupid thing! This is ... ...”

“Da ha ha ha ha ~ ~! By the way, that's not brand new; it’s used!” The girl laughed.

Kiriko turned pale blue and panicked. “How can you sell such things! Uhm, was it at least properly washed and sterilized?”

“You don't want to drink alcohol out of that Amane…”

“Uhuhuhuhu, that's the same reaction Seina had, the white Wau was trying to use it the same way too.”

“Please do not sell such things, please.”

“But I got it from the waste bin at a nearby hospital, it's entirely possible Seina may have been the one to have used it... you sure you don't want to buy it.”

“NO! I do not have such a fetish.”

“Eh ~~~ oh well, things were getting dull at the old Masaki house. Neither Tenchi nor Ayeka were doing anything interesting.... So I thought I'd have a bit of fun.”

“Amane, put that down!” Kiriko picked up the bottle from Amane, ignoring the girl, and put it down and dragged Amane away from the store.

“We have to find Seina.”

As Kiriko left a young man and women picked up the urine bottle. This couple saw Amane messing with it earlier and that made them want to buy it.

“How much is this?” The lady lifted the bottle. By the way, they thought it was supposed to be used the same way as Amane did.

“It works every time ~~~. Nha haha ~~”

Washu did not mean to be malicious. She was only interested in how people in space would use the things from earth.

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Amane and Kiriko spotted Seina entering a transfer gate. They quickly ran to catch him but didn't make it in time. They went in to go after him but it beeped and no transfer was done.

“Why!?”

“The transfer gate is blocked!!”

“Then we go to the nearest gate!”

“It's also blocked!”

“Then we run! Amane, jumped out of the gate, and started running. Kiriko followed her.

× × ×

Erma was sitting on the bench staring at the handgun she had with cold eyes. The little birds around her flew off.

“!”

Erma hid the pistol in her pocket.

“Sorry I took so long!” Seina came up to her with a case full of valuables. Erma stood up to greet him expressionlessly.

“There were so many stores. I got lost, Ahahaha.”

“.....”

“But the shop owner gave me some advice ... ...”

“Seina-kun ... ... those gifts ... Who are they for?”

“Uhm, well ... ...”

“Tell me ... ... I'll ... ... I'll make sure they get them.” Erma took out the gun from her pocket slowly and aimed it at Seina.

“What!!” The moment he saw the black muzzle of the gun, his body stiffened. He tried to say something, but no sound came out. His ears rang.

“I see... you're still traumatized from the last time this happened.” Erma's cold tone and eyes overlapped with Tarrant's in his mind.

“Ah ... ... ah .....” He wanted to think that it was a dream or a joke. But ironically, Seina's intuition was telling him that the crisis in front of him was genuine. The ringing in his ear stopped. He calmed down.

There were only two people there, Elma and Seina. In other words, the only victim was Seina. On the Rinamiku, Mitoto and the crew were there. He had been paralyzed by the fear that they would be killed.

(But this time it's just me ... ...)

“Please... don't try and run.” Erma sighed sadly, looking at Seina. (Whenever he gets something he loses it too soon. He's too used to it.) Erma remembered what she had said about him when Miki died. Erma remembered the way he acted when she took him to the dorm. He seemed to be in the same mood.

Erma had emptied a hole in Seina that she had helped fill with their many encounters. (Now I'm the cause.) Erma who wanted to fill those vacant holes felt buried by the guilt of making one.

“If you were just another GP crew member ... ... I wouldn't have had to do this.” Erma said.

“If I hadn't gone into space, I would've never met you Erma or everyone else. I have no regrets.”

“But ... then I never would've had to point a gun at you!”

“I'm sorry you have to do this Erma. I don't know why you're doing it but ... I'm sorry ... ...” Seina said sadly. He wasn't worried about his own luck but that he was a bother to Erma.

“... ... Seina ... why did it have to be you?”

“But I'm glad that I came here, although there were sad things, it was really fun ... I felt alive ... I really thought ...”

“You fool!!” Erma shouted and the next moment, a strange thing happened to Erma's body. “How can you say such a thing....., stop it.” Her voice changed in the middle of her talking.

“..... Eh? Ryoko??”

In front of Seina, Erma changed into Ryoko Balta.

“I am also Erma ..... Seina ... Life with you ... It was fun, I wanted to stay like that as long as I could ... ... if I could ...”

"Me too... living with you and the others was fun. If possible... I wanted things to stay like that forever..."
Large tears were falling from Ryoko's face.
"Even for me... this was the place where I could live as myself."

From Ryoko's eyes, tears were overflowing.

"For me, this was finally a place where I could live as myself..." Ryoko had realized this the other night in her room on her ship as she looked at the picture she had taken with Seina.

"……However!" Ryoko held the handgun with both hands. "However……" If she didn't shoot Seina, her crew and their family's would be in danger. "However……" "Why? Why won't you run away?" Ryoko screamed, she was convinced that Seina wouldn't run away.

Seina looked straight at Ryoko without any emotion, the same as back when Miki died. Seina was ready to take the little bit of happiness he had and end his life for her … … … At that time, what Ryoko felt was not guilt, It was lament.

—— Ryoko Balta! Hurry up!

The agents surveying her sent a Biometric communication that time was running out. If she wasted any more time, it would be recognized as betrayal, and her crew and their family may have been executed.

Ryoko lost the power in her hands and her grip loosened. "... ... It's no use." Ryoko smiled silently, she chose Seina over her crew.

"Ryoko!"

She got a short distance away from Seina, and put the gun to her own head.

"What are you doing!?" The surveillance person was confused by Ryoko's behavior.

"Sorry……"

When Ryoko went to pull the trigger, a loud siren sound rang out.

"Seina! We found you!" A mini patrol car rushed and came in between Seina and Ryoko!

"Why are you on a date with Erma and not me, wait what ...?" Amane shouted.

As she jumped out of the car, she and Kiriko were surprised when they saw Ryoko.

"Ryoko Balta!"

Pew! Ryoko immediately shot her handgun at Kiriko.

A moment before that, Amane moved in front of them to guard her and Seina and her guardian blocked it.

A GP Special Forces platoon jumped out of the nearby gate and turned their guns on Ryoko.

“Ryoko Balta! Surrender!”

Ignoring the Captain's words, Ryoko fired at the Special Forces while activating her own guardian.

“Be careful, it's an S class guardian!”

As Ryoko's guardian was supplied by Airi, even though it was going against the Special Forces, it would be a challenge for them.

However, the end came abruptly.

Ryoko's guardian attacked one of the Special Forces guardian, it broke theirs instantly.

One of the members of the Special Forces shot off an energy bomb at her.

Boom! The energy bomb bypassed her guardian and evaporated Ryoko's upper body in an instant.

“Don't look!” Kiriko shielded Seina's eyes.

“... Ryoko-san!” Seina heard what knew could only be the sound of Ryoko's lower body collapsing to the ground.

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Amane was reporting what had happened to Airi who had arrived on the scene.

“How's he doing?”

Amane leaned against Kiriko who was taking care of Seina who was stunned.

“Kiriko, Seina are you alright?” Airi came into the armored trailer that had arrived to keep them safe.

A bag containing Ryoko's body was carried in a stretcher in front of Seina who had sat down on a small bench installed on the walls of the van.

“Airi!”

Kiriko was angry at the insensitivity of Airi putting the body with Seina, but Airi ordered the van to start without saying anything. The armored car began moving, Seina remained silent, taking out a package from his bag.

“What is that?” Kiriko asked.

Seina slowly opened his mouth.

“I wanted to thank the people who took care of me with my first paycheck ... ...”

“Is that why you went to that bazaar ...?”

“Erma helped me find it and helped me buy things.”

“Oh so that's what happened. So what is this?”

Seina took out another package. “This is Erma's, and well... this is Ms. Ryoko's.” Seina said, staring at the two packets.

“Seina-chan ...?”

“... ... Ryoko ..... After meeting Seto, you invited me to join you and the pirates. Of course, I wouldn't but ... ..”“ Seina stopped as he cried and took a deep breath and resumed speaking. “... ... ... Kiriko you said that the recidivism rate after catching pirates was small.”

“Is that why?”

“... ...I figured if we caught you, you would have stopped being a Space pirate, I thought I could give it to you.”

“Seina-chan ... ...”

“Why did you do it? ... I don't quite understand.” Seina rose slowly and tried to place the two packets on Ryoko's body.

The dead body bag suddenly moved!

“Waaaaaaaaaaa!”

“Kyaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!” Seina and everyone else fell on the floor.

“What?What?what?what?what?what?what?what?what?what?what?what?what?what?what?what?what?what?what?what?what?what?” Amane shouted loudly, pointing to the body bag moving.

“Oh.....Well about that...” Airi seemed to know what was going on.

“Ahh! Get me out of here already!” NB's voice shouted from the bag.

“Yeah yeah yeah!” Airi detached the seal on the bag. And the lower body of Ryoko stood up from inside and changed into a pearl colored orb.

“Eh, NB? Why are you here???” Seina got up.

“Master, when Miss Kiriko drove the car between you two, I was lurking in subspace. I camouflaged myself and took Ryoko's place.”

“So what about Ryoko?”

“She's fine.”

“Whew, that's good……” Seina breathed a sigh of relief.

“Could you explain what that thing meant?” Amane glared at Airi.

“Eh ~ ~ ~, well I'm not sure where to start with the explanation...” Airi said with a cute voice.

“From the very beginning. Airi, did you know that Erma was Ryoko? When did you find out?”

“When I hired her, she was clearly a spy, we've been using her to purposely leak information to the pirates.”

“So you've been using Erma huh ...”

“Ahahahaha, well something like that.” Airi said.

Kiriko had a complicated expression on her face.

“Hey Kiriko-chan, it was planned that NB would have taken Seina's place if this had happened earlier... Relax...”

“You've planned for this situation since way back then?”

“Yeah ♡”

“I was not worried much, though, from the perspective of the Da Ruma Guild, Seina at that time was not that big of a threat, they just sent spies. There was no reason for it... but the Guild must be really suffering and Seina's bias is practically occult so we sort of knew this would happen eventually. We had people tailing them the whole time.”

“Why didn't you have Seina switched this time? Was Ryoko more important than Seina?” Kiriko glanced at Airi with a mean look.

Airi implied that saving Ryoko Balta was important, because Seina was used as a tool to do it.

“Ryoko Balta is a popular Space pirate within the GP, so it makes sense...” Amane said.

“..... Still ... ...”

“And you even went as far as to acquire Ryoko Balta's personal data!”

“Well ... I made it from various sources...”

“Sure...” It was certain that Ryoko · Balta's personal data was not made by Airi from her expression.

“This seems to go deeper than I thought.” Amane said.

Kiriko nodded.

The two judged that pursuing Airi further about Ryoko Balta was a waste.

“Airi, what will happen to Ryoko now?”

“Everything depends on her, but Seina has decided what he wants... haven't you?”

Airi held out her hand.

“I have……” Seina was puzzled for a moment, but handed the two packets he had to Airi. Airi placed them in the side pocket of the backpack.

“Oh, I just remembered we got a communication from Seiryo for Seina via Komachi Kyo.”

“For me?”

“... ...I WILL DEFEAT YOU! “

“What does that mean?”

“It seems he's joined the Da Ruma Guild ... Seiryo's father signed a business deal with them ... .”

“Oh...”

“... Wow it's just like Amane predicted...”

“Airi-sama, if I encounter that idiot, can I blow him up without question?”

“Ahahahaha!”

“Wow, why are you laughing?” Airi sat down next to Seina and leaned on him.

“We can't. Humans have freedom of travel here ... Even if he's an idiot, we should respect that. And well, even if he is a Space pirate, the Tennan special rules still applies. That said, if he does something piratey please don't hesitate to shoot. “

“Eh!?”

“Now Seina... what about me... where's my first paycheck gift ♡”

“Well ... uhm ... I got that in my bag... ... Kiriko-san's as well” he said diverting his eyes from Airi.

“Oh you didn't have to get me anything ... ...” Kiriko said.

“Wait a moment! That gift... it's not what you bought before going to that bazaar, is it?” Amane asked.

“Ahh!!” Kiriko also remembered Seina's shopping.

“Before going to the bazaar ... ... No way!”

“Seina! Why did you go buy underwear, and adult toys, who was that for, and that other dubious place too...?”

“That was all NB ... ...”

“NB?”

“Master you promised to keep it a secret!

“No I promised to pick it up. Why did you make me go to such strange places! I was so embarrassed!”

“NB ..... you ...” Kiriko approached with the face of a demon instructor.

“Aaaah! I was forced to by someone else! It was Airi.”

“I couldn't stop it she took control over NB!” It was Kirche who was manipulating NB when he said that last part.

“Airi-samaaaaaaaaa ... ...”

“Uhm.... I can explain.” Airi ran to try to get out of the van.

“Get her!” Kiriko grabbed Airi and looked at her with an evil expression.

“Aaaahh ~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~”

The pathetic Airi was caught by Kiriko and dragged from the armored trailer to the interrogation room inside the GP ship which the trailer had been loaded on. She looked like prey caught by a carnivorous beast.

“Help me!!” Airi desperately shouted, but all the Special Forces on the ship sided with Kiriko, so no one tried to help Airi.

Chapter Six: The Wall of Stupidity

The day before the attempted assassination, Komachi got a communication from Huo Balta telling her that he was being held captive by Tarrant and was escaping and needed help.

She called Ryoko's adjutant and told him.

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Komachi broke Seiryo out of his cell, she barely managed to give him a light sword before he began to run off haphazardly setting off all the alarms on the ship.

Komachi doubted her choice of freeing him to cause a distraction, but he went directly to the security guards room and beat everyone in the room, then he disabled the security cameras and destroyed a ton of weapons systems and then he found some dangerous weapons hidden on the ship and continued his rampage.

Da Ruma watched Seiryo rampage.

“He's a GP member right?”

“He's supposed to be under Tarrant's jurisdiction.”

“I apologize for this.” Tarrant told him.

But Seiryo proceeded to go back and blew a hole right into Tarrant's secret room.

“Tarrant what is the meaning of this!”

Tarrant took out his gun and shot his own staff members. “I'm sorry I had no idea.”

“That doesn't change the fact that you’re responsible for not supervising your crew.”

“I'm aware.” Tarrant panicked and took the rest of his men and quickly left.

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After he left, he immediately proceeded to turn to one of his subordinates and bash their jaw in, which as far as they were concerned was better than being shot dead.

“Sir, we're receiving a message from the research satellite. Huo Balta has escaped!”

It was a dire emergency, even more dire then Seiryo's escape.

“The phantom freed him and then caused a large part of the satellite to self-destruct along with Huo's research.”

He wanted to leave immediately to take care of the situation but he couldn't launch the Daedalus with the Big Da Ruma under internal attack. He sent his subordinates to do it instead.

On Tarrant's desert planet laboratory, researchers were trying to disinfect their systems from the phantom Ai with an Astral that was plaguing the satellite's system.

“It's no good, we can't stop the ship Huo is on!”

“Destroy it! We can't let him get away!”

“We can't, the rest of the satellite is exploding!”

The satellite onscreen exploded into chunks and a huge chunk fell to the planet right outside the base but the shielding on the base protected it.

“What about the phantom? Is it gone?”

“Our containment program was working up until the explosion. We can't confirm if it's gone for sure though. It disappeared after the second round of blocks exploded.”

“Launch a ship to go after them now!”

“Tell Tarrant-sama I am taking responsibility for this blunder.” The head researcher said. Their guards turned their guns on him and his fellow researchers and shot them all to death. As this happened they didn't notice it but the phantom had appeared in the computers behind them as they fired on the researchers. The monitors glowed with a white light for a moment.

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On the Mikagami's bridge Seto and Minaho confirmed that Huo had been successfully taken into protective custody. He had sent information that let them jump to him but not know where he was... so they were unable to locate Tarrant's base. Huo's ship had been destroyed but he managed to escape unharmed.

“Thanks to the data we've cut down the possible locations of Tarrant's base from 800,000 to only 300,000 possible places. Luckily though, he escaped with the original J. I can't believe it. It's been 20,000 years since they got their hands on it and now it can finally be returned to Jurai! At any rate, send a private delivery service to get it to us. I need it shipped C.O.D.”

“But Seto!”

”I know, Ringo will be unhappy but we can't pay the standard shipping rates for this. It's going to be a challenging delivery.”

“By the way I heard from Kiriko... apparently Airi did something that made her very mad.”

“I know. Hehe! I already saw. Watching Seina-chan go into that lingerie shop was hilarious. The gifts he got us are nice though aren't they.” Seto caressed her amber ear ring and Minaho had on an amber broach.

“By the way... how are things going with the ship?”

“Neeju Na Melmas, Ryo-Ohki and the new ship should arrive in 8 hours. Noike is escorting them here.”

“The Kamidake will be taking its final flight test over the next 3 days.” Seto pulled up a monitor.

“No way!”

The flight path of the ship went right into Huo Balta's rescue ships trajectory.

“I think we found our delivery guy.”

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Seto went home to the residential area of her ship. She jumped into the lake around her house and happily swam in it while admiring her gift from Seina. She then went and bathed and got into her night clothes. She went before her mirror.

Mirror · Seto - - Seto.

“Uhuhuhu ... True, that's terrible ... yet only I am angry.”

– – Did he really give you something like that?

“Yes it is my treasure.”

— How innocent ... ...

“ ... ... I'm happy”

— That's good.

“Yup……”

— Huhuhu

“Huhuhuhuhu”

Chapter Seven: Run away

As Seina took the Kamidake on its last test flight, the girls admired their gifts. They noticed that NB had one too. It seemed very happy with it and was blushing.

“Why did you get one for NB?”

“Well the shop owner showed me a pearl she had for sale and it looked just like him so I figured I'd get it for him.” The pearl changed colors in the light and NB changed its colors to match.

Amane and Kiriko laughed as they watched it.

“Captain we're receiving a distress signal!” Alan reported.

They intercepted an escape pod. It opened to reveal a man inside.

“I am Captain Seina Yamada. This is a GP ship, you’re going to be ok.”

“GP.... Here.... Take this box..... Be careful.... They’re trying to take it back.”

“Try not to talk.”

“You must hurry... get this box.... to Seto.”

“Take him to the medical room quickly!”

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Kiriko later came onto the bridge and told Seina the man was alright.

“Hakuren do you know what's in the box?”

“Its contents are sealed too well to scan the inside and the shipping data is encrypted. But it's definitely for Seto.

“The escape pod belongs to a private transport company, 5002337 .....!”

“Pirates must be after this package... set alert status to level 3, prepare a hyperspace jump!”

“Captain what are you doing?”

“We’re going to deliver this package!”

“Captain I'm detecting many ships jumping out of warp all at once in front of us!”

We won’t be able to jump for another few minutes.”

The pirate ships began to attack.

“There are too many of them! Let's get out of here!

“We've sustained direct hits... but there's no damage that's odd.”

On the outside of the Kamidake a sticky paint like substance clung to the hull.

“Preparing to jump!”

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“Just as expected.” Gazura smiled on the bridge of his ship.

“This should be good.... Ok ... Let the hunt begin.”

Gazura stared at the space where Kamidake had disappeared and smiled.

Afterword: Concluding Theater Part 3

“Owch that hurts ... ...!” Kai was struggling under his mother’s heel when he noticed his embarrassed and silent mother holding the receiver.

“Wow, you look like I do when I look at my girlfriend.”

“What are you saying? Who are you dating!?”

“Oh, no one, I'm just saying you get a youthful glow and start floating when you talk about Seina ... .” Kai gazed at Tsukiko. “Mother, I know you're single and free to mingle with anyone, but I don't want to call Seina my dad.”

“Kai ......”

“My dad is only one for me ... .” Kai glanced at her as he said that sadly.

Tsukiko was staring at him oddly. “Kai ......? How much money did Dai give you to say something like that?”

“Giyyyyyyyyy!!”

Kai didn't have anything to say to that. Tsukiko hit the nail right on the head.

“Well then, I guess you don't need any pocket money from me this month, Kai.”

“Ahh! No! I’m sorry, mother! Please! I'll gladly call Seina my father so there's no need to hold out on my allowance ... ...”

For Kai, one month's allowance was more important to him than this mother getting married to his friend / classmate.

“Hey, Kai! That's not what we promised!” Kai's father, Dai, who was listening to Tsukiko's conversation from the shade behind the sliding door came in and yelled.

“Well I would have kept my mouth shut if you weren't so cheap!”

“I'm cutting your Allowance.”

“I haven't gotten any money from either one of you in forever! I don't even care!”

“If you wanted to get paid more, you'd name drop me more!” Kai and Dai began fighting like elementary school students.

Bam! Pow! Tsukiko's kicked Dai right into Kai and the two went rolling out into the garden. Tsukiko closed the sliding door on them and sat down again before taking the telephone.

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“Thank you for waiting. Now we can talk quietly.” Tsukiko smiled.

“They seem the same as ever.” Seina was puzzled by Kai's father's remarks. Even though he knew Kai was joking, he was conscious of Tsukiko as a woman, not just as the mother of his friend, and as Kiriko who he has also grown close with was growing up she had started looking more and more like Tsukiko.

“Well I'm exhausted, they tire me out.” As usual, Tsukiko put her hands on her temple while frowning.

When Seina was a child, Tsukiko and Dai's fights were hard to see, but as he grew, he was able to see that Tsukiko had realized that Dai was immature and childlike and that she realized he would never be independent.

Interestingly, they had a similar relationship to the relationship between Kiriko and Kai.

“Oh, that's right! Hey Seina. In a little while Kai will know about his true identity, do you want to participate in the ritual?”

“In the ritual?”

“We have a good idea to surprise him! You want in?”

“Ha ha ha, I'll think about it.”

“Fuhhhh, that's too bad ... ...” Tsukiko suddenly put on serious face – – –

Of course Tsukiko had no video feed to see him but she imagined what it would look like and in her head she stared at Seina.

“When it's over, Kai will be able to do whatever he wants... ..... If that happens, I think I might go to the Academy again and study, what do you think about that?”

“Were you a student?”

“Yes, I'm currently on maternity leave, but I can resume my schooling immediately as soon as I return.” Tsukiko awaited his response in suspense.

“I think you should.”

“Oh really? Thank you Seina.” As Tsukiko was relieved, she smiled happily.

“Seina, dinner is ready, please get off the phone.”

She heard Kiriko's voice from the other side of the phone.

“Oh... well you heard her Aunt Tsukiko, I'll call you again later.”

“Please do.”

“Okay bye.”

Seina hung up.

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“I think you should” eh? ... If I go over there, I think I will also live with Seina-chan ♡” Tsukiko muttered with a full smile.